

# messing about in **BOATS**

Volume 38 – Number 5

September 2020

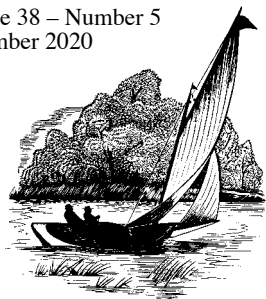
**A Sampling of What's Within**  
"Look! A Muskoxen!" - Covid Paddling  
A Twofer Cruise - More Frame Up  
"Where Have All Our Small Boats Gone?"  
Boat Building With Popi - A Marvelous Mystery II  
Building an 8' Open Canoe - Building a Plans Scale Model



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## Commentary...

Bob Hicks, Editor

It is August 1st as I write this, the end of a three month period that was sorta suggested as maybe being turnaround time for life to get back to the now elusive “normal.” No luck, after the recent easing of the “lockdown” that has destroyed our economy, the plague seems to be getting worse again so, as I rhetorically asked last month, who knows where it is headed? By now as you read this in September (it may be well into the month due to the postal delays) you will have a clearer view of what the coming winter is shaping up to be.

I mentioned a month ago that the Wood-enBoat Show and the Maine Boats, Homes & Harbors Show had been postponed (not cancelled) to August, optimistically hoping things would have improved enough to go ahead with these two major summer gatherings. Again, no luck, both were cancelled. Finding a way to have any large group gather for any reason in the face of the limitations being imposed on public gatherings in the hope of stopping the spread of the covid 19 proved to be an impossibility.

Humans are social animals but we are instead being directed to give up our “normal” casual closeness and adopt “social distancing,” which is just a euphemism for “keep your distance.” So our summer boating gatherings are not happening, it’s becoming the summer season that wasn’t. So be it, as I mentioned before we are still fortunate to be able enjoy a recreational activity that can still be indulged if we do so alone or with family and friends.

In the face of the very real major issues we now see ahead, the question is asked why should we care about our minor level recreational activity? How can we get excited and enthused about messing about in boats as our economy continues to crater (38% drop in GDP in the last quarter and still heading down) and our collective health is threatened by this virus that our medical establishment and government seem at a loss as to how to deal with, short of locking everyone away while they search for answers.

Well, why not enjoy what we can if it so doing we are not endangering others? Taking our own chances is our own prerogative and our way to play does not have aspects that threaten others with exposure to disease. Ongoing contact (chiefly by phone, email and letters) from many of you, as well as amongst our extended family and personal friends, suggests you share this feeling of it’s okay to continue enjoying life as we practice it.

A look through this issue will show that there is still much creative activity going on in our game that is of intrinsic value to our quality of life, despite the disruption of so much we have always taken for granted. Sharing all of this amongst all of you is our purpose and the ongoing participation from many of you in the form of stories and photos make this possible. It’s not a substitute for in person getting together, but neither is the “online” stuff like “Zoom” and “Skype.”

The initial adverse impact of the pandemic on us here at *MAIB* was noticeable as subscriptions and renewals dipped well below normal in May and June, but July saw a recovery (perhaps some catching up?) for which we are grateful. If too many who find the magazine worthwhile feel that the \$40 a year to enjoy *MAIB* will be needed for the more necessary things in life, we face, like many small businesses already at or over the edge financially, the end of our now 38 years of continuous publication. We do appreciate this ongoing support you have demonstrated and will continue to forge ahead.

To those who have expressed concern for our personal well being (at 88 and 90, Jane and I are presumed to be “at risk”) please be advised we are both well, as is our entire extended family (now four generations and counting). At the leading edge of now 61 years of publishing our own small magazines (38 with *MAIB*) we are determined not to quit in the face of this latest obstacle to what has been a good life. Again, we both thank you for your ongoing interest and support.

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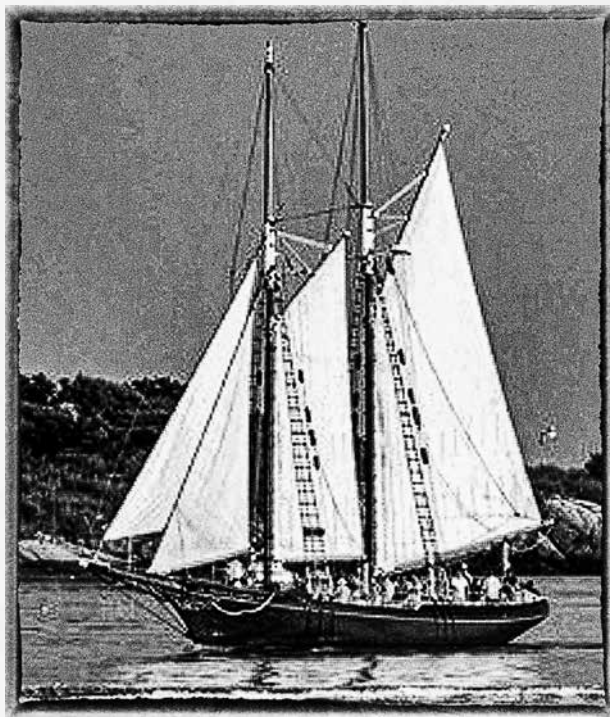
## On the Cover...

Canoe adventuring correspondent Dick Winslow is back with another of his adventure trips, this time a 2019 trip into the “far north” beyond the Northwest Passage to paddle the 99 mile long Thomsen River on remote Banks Island in Canada’s Aulavik National Park, home of the world’s largest herd of muskoxen. He shares his experience with us beginning on page 6.

## *Harkening Back With Harvey*

*"Small craft images from today as  
viewed through a long ago lens."*

*Images by Harvey Petersiel*



*"The Golden  
Age of Sail  
Returns!"*



## You write to us about...

### In Memoriam...

#### Mark Lindsay Designer and Boat Builder



Mark Lindsay, 75, designer and boat builder, died unexpectedly on September 6, 2019, at his home on the Mill River in Gloucester. Mark was always happiest "messing about in boats." Childhood summers in Connecticut spent sailing a wooden boat with an uncle inspired his love of the beauty and freedom of being on the water. At age 14 he and his father built a Sailfish together, which Mark sailed and raced for many years.

He also loved drawing and painting but became convinced he couldn't earn a living doing that so he directed his artistic talents toward architecture, studying at the University of Pennsylvania and MIT where his own creative style blossomed and his love of sailing grew.

Never cut out to work as an architect in a big firm, Mark left grad school at MIT after two years to work in several small shops building sailboats, then spent a winter sailing across the Atlantic and living in the Caribbean. He worked for Carter Yachts as a designer until the demise of that company in 1974. In early 1975 Joan and Art Ellis asked him to build them a Fireball one design racing dinghy. He said yes and the rest is history.

Borrowing from some aerospace technology, he built them a super light boat and they went on to win their first regatta, a world championship, with a woman at the helm! His first little shop in Manchester, Massachusetts, turned out many world championship winners due to his tremendous curiosity and willingness to experiment and innovate.

Mark Lindsay Boatbuilders had a shop in Gloucester, Massachusetts, for years, building racing sailboats for sailors from all over the world. He worked on everything from Bill Koch's America's Cup program to creating the perfect rudder for a small boat sailor. In 1995 he joined forces with Scott Smith and Jeff Berger (both bankers and sailors) to create Boston Boatworks on the waterfront in East Boston.

After years of building world class sailboats up to 63' BBW became the exclusive builder for MJM Yachts, beautiful lightweight motor yachts designed by Doug Zurn. What Mark loved most about his work was the opportunity to create collaborative connections with his workers and customers, many of whom became good friends.

Mark's passion for boat building and sailing led him to make all kinds of connections outside of his work. He started a boat building program at the Shore Country Day School, volunteered for AMC Three Mile Island projects for over 20 years and was the president of the Board of the Essex Shipbuilding Museum. Courageous Sailing in Charlestown was his latest.

About eight years ago Mark's wife, Marty, asked him to be sure he was doing what he wanted to do. That question led to his taking watercolor classes with Joel Janowitz in Boston. Mark said, "Hundreds of paintings later I've discovered a whole new excitement in being alive." At the time of his passing he was planning to retire and spend more time painting watercolors and sailing his beloved wooden boat *Cepheus*. He will be greatly missed by all who worked, played, sailed and danced with him.



### Information Wanted...

#### What About This Plane?

Any idea what this wood plane was used for and/or what was it called?

C. Henry Depew, Tallahassee, FL

PS: According to a response from *Wooden Boat*, "This looks a good deal like a Stanley 78 rabbit plane. The tapped hole in the port side is for a depth from edge slide. Lovely tool."

C. Henry Depew, Tallahassee, FL

### Information of Interest...

#### Elf Sitting Out This Season

This is one of the toughest notes for me to share. For a number of reasons, based on the safety issues of the moment, I have made the decision to sit this year out and not rig *Elf*. We will take every safe opportunity to work on *Elf* if possible, to just do something else nautical during the remainder of the season.

I have a number of projects aboard to constantly work on to keep *Elf* in Bristol Ship Shape, and appreciate ALL help.

Captain Rick Carrion, Earleville, MD

#### 2020 Begins 50 Years of *Elf* and Captain Rick

Rick purchased *Elf* July 7, 1971, for \$1,500 and Mom's permission! The then 19-year-old college student used all his summer job savings to purchase a dreamboat. Her name was *Flying High*. Those years ago the boat was a derelict and Captain Rick was the dreamer.

The Classic Yacht Research Guild (CYRG) membership has kept her afloat and a competitive racer for 50 years. Well, not always afloat, but "in process!" We appreciate the continued interest in *Elf*, America's oldest active small racing yacht!

Covid 19 has postponed our 10th annual *Elf* Classic Yacht Race on the Chesapeake Bay, and perhaps our annual crab fest, although that remains on the calendar for September 26.

The *Elf* will not be commissioned this sailing season, allowing time for some needed repairs and maintenance.

Visit our website, [cyrg.org](http://cyrg.org), for all the ways you can support the Classic Yacht Restoration Guild and our Chesapeake maritime prize, The *Elf* Special "Golden Anniversary" events are in the planning stages for next year.

On behalf of *Elf*, her crew and the Board of Directors of the Classic Yacht Restoration Guild, we wish you a safe and happy sailing season! As Captain Rick would say, "It's all good!"







Cleanup time for Richard Honan, 12, of Cottage Park Yacht Club as he applies a little elbow grease to his Turnabout.

Having our photo in Sports Illustrated sailing at M'head (that's me on the right).



## Best Time of our Lives

By Richard Honan

I received this Hustler sailboat story from Renzo Geromini. Renzo grew up with us, sailing at the CPYC, then up to Marblehead Race Week and then over to Quincy Bay Race Week. It was the best time of our lives!

Free as a bird, sailing every day, sailing to and exploring all the old WWII military forts on the Boston Harbor Islands. Our first encounters with girls. Racing up in Marblehead with 500 other kids. Sleeping over in Marblehead on someone's father's boat. Swimming pool hopping at night. Sunday afternoon interclub racing over at Wollaston, Squantum and Quincy Yacht Clubs. Going into the yacht club after the races for chowder, steamed hot dogs and a soda.

Then there was being asked to sail a boat back from Marblehead to Winthrop. No charts, we didn't even know which direction, we just looked for the Custom House Tower in Boston. It was the best! Renzo recalls:

"After a Marblehead Race Week sometime before 1966 me and your brother Patrick hitchhiked to Marblehead to sail a Hustler sailboat back to Winthrop. I can't remember who owned the boat. Do remember Pat ripped off a case of soft drinks from a delivery truck at whatever yacht club we got to. Started sailing it back. Was OK until the wind died. Then we could do nothing but drift seaward with the outgoing tide. We were about half or two-thirds of the way home. It was, of course, very quiet.

We'd been sitting and drifting for maybe an hour with the coastline having just disappeared to the west when a whale breached 50' from the boat. It was both magnificent and terrifying! The whale displaced so much ocean so suddenly and without any warning! The Hustler seemed really tiny, fragile and insignificant! To have such a large wonderful living thing be that close! And to think how lucky we were he didn't come up under the boat!

Wow! Never before or since have I ever been that close to a whale! No, can't remember what kind. Perhaps a "prankster whale?" The kind which gets its kicks scaring the bejesus outta two boys in a small sailboat?



Freckle faced crew of an 8' Turnabout hurries to hoist sail and join 123 tiny rivals at the starting line.

Anyway, that was it. The whale went away without any more theatrics. The wind came up and we sailed home safely. The memory of that day in the Hustler with your brother Pat and the whale is burned into my memory. Damn cool!"



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"We are here in Inuvik," our party would often explain to our Inuit acquaintances," to canoe the Thomsen River on Banks Island."

They shrugged. "It's still winter up there," they would invariably respond.

Our group of seven had arrived in Inuvik, Northwest Territories, Canada, in mid June 2019. Ahead was a 12-day canoe paddle of the entire length of the 99-mile long Thomsen River on Banks Island, above and across from the Northwest Passage. So much for goals and aspirations, that was our plan on paper.

Organized by the Black Feather guiding outfit of Ontario, this expedition was comprised of three guides and four guests. Arriving from distant places, we had met in Inuvik, established as a new community in 1953. The name translates from the Inuit language Inuvialuktun as "place of man." Some 180 miles south of the Arctic Ocean and largely Inuit in population, this town of 2,300 people is a jumping off destination for many canoe trips. Regular air service and bush planes link this hub to the outside world.

I had been to this frontier town twice before, the first to fly to Summit Lake, the headwaters of the Little Bell/Bell/Porcupine Rivers, and later on to descend the Firth River. Both river systems are on the mainland and below the tree line.

These two previous expeditions dwarf in comparison to the Thomsen, the furthest north navigable river in Canada. The extremely isolated Thomsen is totally dependent on meltwater runoff during the short month or two of summer whereupon the water level drops, rendering it too shallow to paddle. And then winter returns.

One does not simply show up out of the blue to embark on this river. Rules and regulations are in effect, the Canadian government is committed to avoiding searches for missing people.

Our party duly arrived at the Parks Canada headquarters in downtown Inuvik to register and to attend a mandatory orientation meeting, every person held accountable. As we sat around a table an attractive lady ranger with pamphlets, maps and photos beamed on a screen spoke realistically about the demanding priorities of the trip. She stressed the importance of returning safely.

"All wildlife in Aulavik National Park is protected," she said. "One does not collect or disturb Inuit artifacts. No gold panning is allowed."

Aulavik, from Inuvialuktun, meaning "place where people travel" is a 7,000 square mile fly-in park on the northern half of the island. The southern half is reserved for traditional sustenance hunting and fishing by the Inuit. Perhaps 25 people a year descend the Thomsen.

We all well knew the stakes involved, the cold, the wind and the risk, no place for an accident or illness.

Ahead is the real North, raw, primitive and elemental, the North of the explorers Roald Amundsen and Vilhjalmur Stefansson who had traveled through this area without maps. The somewhat romanticized North, vividly depicted by authors Jack London, Robert Service and Rex Beach is, by contrast, a place with dancehall girls in honky tonk saloons, violent sled dogs and claim jumping prospectors during the various gold rushes. That is what the well heeled tourist of today wants and expects.

I reflected on the Black Feather leader-

## "Look! A Muskoxen!"

### Canoeing Canada's Thomsen River in a Land of Cold, Snow and Wind

By Richard E. Winslow III  
Dedicated to the Inuit People  
Pioneering Explorers of the Far North

ship pledged to this undertaking. This outfit allows no shortcuts. All of their guides, many with years of experience with the company, attend a week long boot camp before the start of the season. After a few days of lectures and familiarity with the equipment as part of their training, they embark upon a three or four day shakedown paddle on a nearby river. If any adjustments are to be made, they are addressed and are to be solved well in advance before meeting any client. Once the season begins they are fully qualified.

Our guides on the Thomsen reached these high standards. In his mid 30s, Garret, the head guide, hails from British Columbia in the heart of the skiing, hot springs soaking and mountaineering country. In addition to participating in these sports, Garret throws in kite surfing for good measure. During his five years with Black Feather, his love of the wild occasionally takes him away from his wife and two children. When at home he grows his own food for his family on his farm.

Garret and his fellow guides follow a long and time honored tradition of competence and leadership among guides. I have been greatly impressed with the French Canadian guides with whom I have paddled over the years on the Kedgwick, Patapédia, Restigouche and Upsalquitch Rivers in New Brunswick.

One guide in particular was Gilles, who was the complete outdoorsman. He produced his own maple syrup tapped from the trees, gathered honey from his beehive apiary and served up his own homemade fiddlehead soup, the leaves cut with his knife. Gilles served with pride all these delicacies on his trips. He and Garret are prime examples of such earth bound and self sufficient guides who live off the land in much the same traditional way as the Inuit and the Indians have done for thousands of years.

Michelle, the second guide on this trip, is in her mid to late 20s. She engages in fieldwork in the off season in Newfoundland and Labrador to complete her nursing degree. On these far from civilization expeditions, a team doctor or nurse is close to being indispensable. For myself, either by superstition or common sense, I always pitch my tent alongside that of the medical person. In case something might happen in the middle of the night, I am covered.

Michelle looks forward to every trip. "One of the highlights of my guiding career," she said, "was kayaking in the Alexandra Fjord off Ellesmere Island."

I was curious. "Does the company name of Black Feather," I asked, "have any significance?"

"Oh yes," she answered. "There is a custom, a tradition, in the North that when a traveler crosses the Arctic Circle for the first time, he or she is awarded a black feather to honor this accomplishment."

The importance of the black feather for this occasion derives from the First Nation/

Indian culture. They revere the feather as a symbol of their beliefs and rituals. Various birds are associated with specific personality traits. The black feather of the crow symbolizes balance, skills and foresight. Likewise, the black feather of the raven symbolizes creativity and knowledge. (The airline attendant must have forgotten to hand me a feather as I had already crossed the Arctic Circle on my flight to Inuvik.) We needed these traits for a successful expedition. The black feather award makes perfect sense.

I was glad I was not, by contrast, crossing the Equator to appear in a ceremony before King Neptune and his court to submit to hazing. Crossing the Arctic Circle to face hardship amounts to enough initiation.

Cedar, the third guide, served as my helper. A native of Ontario, and bent on an outdoor career, he had migrated west to the wilder Yukon. Now living in Whitehorse, Yukon, Cedar is in his late 20s and good with his hands and mind.

"I guide in Antarctica in their summers," he said, "when it is winter up here. Many scientists and mountaineers come to our camp. We fly people to the South Pole on day trips. Our group visits penguin colonies. We also have clients who want to climb 16,000' Mount Vinson, the highest on the continent."

During the entire trip, Cedar anticipated way in advance every courtesy to assist me. He always had a cup of hot tea awaiting me as I entered the cook tent. We became close friends.



"Thanks, Cedar, for handing me my morning cup of hot tea." Cedar, my indispensable guide, serves as my helper throughout the expedition. Without him I would have been left homeless on the tundra.

We four guests were old timers on Arctic trips such as this one, heading north virtually every summer for a guided expedition. Peter and Susan, husband and wife, hailed from Ontario. He is a doctor and pledged himself to be available for any potential illness or accident.

John is a resident of Richmond, Virginia, a man in his 60s. Upon his retirement from his quarry business, he gladly left behind breathing harmful rock dust to seek fresh air in the wilderness. Last year we had met by chance at Plummer's Lodge on Great Bear Lake, Northwest Territories. He was headed for a canoe trip on the Hood River while I would be rafting on the Coppermine.

I myself, the graybeard of the lot, am a historian and a librarian, but love canoeing even more. Among my heroes is John Muir, the noted conservationist and one of the founders of the Sierra Club. Muir wrote books about all his expeditions, including accounts of his mountaineering first ascents.

"Going to the mountains," he vowed, "is going home." I can only alter Muir's well known motto, saying, "Going to the lakes and rivers is going home."

We were staying at the Arctic Chalet cabins, just east of Inuvik, packing and waiting. We talked at length, taking all our meals together. From the outset, I sensed our party comprised a well knit responsible group, no oddballs or troublemakers. I relish this good feeling because I have gone on earlier expeditions where personality conflicts and discord have threatened the group's safety and survival. On a remote Quebec river, the Ashuapmushuan, some years ago I witnessed and endured first hand such anger, frustration and rancor.

The head guide and one of the guests clashed repeatedly without letup for five days, a battle from start to finish. Our group would be peacefully paddling along and would approach an island in midstream. "We'll paddle river right to shoot by the island," the guest would explain. "This is the best channel."

"No, no," the startled guide would shout. "River left is the safest route." Each would take off pell mell with the split up group following, half on one side of the river and the other hugging the opposite bank.

This crazy rivalry did not stop there. The next conflict erupted on finding a suitable campsite for the night. A wrangling festered as to whether to take the first campsite we had scouted or to move on. One of the two would invariably be dissatisfied. "We've got to press on and look for a better site," he would say, as he headed back to his beached canoe. The fact that dusk was fast approaching did not matter to him.

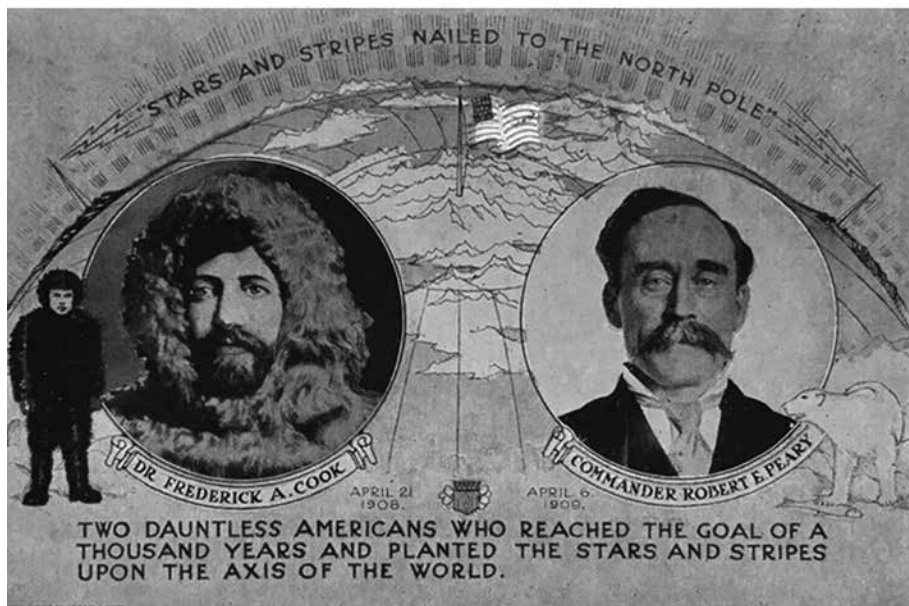
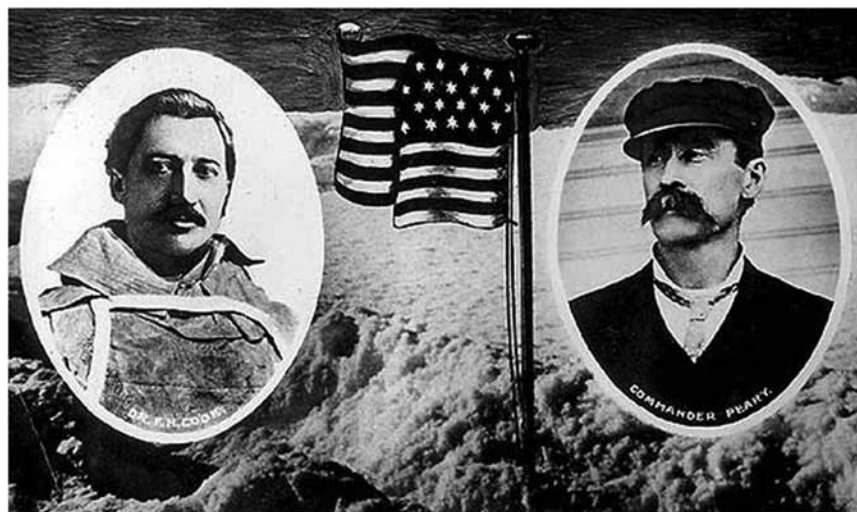
The proverbial "best site," a mile or two downstream, usually turns out worse than the first one we had abandoned. On the last night of this tomfoolery we finally pulled off the river below rapids in darkness. We were exceedingly lucky, no one had dumped.

Another story, detrimental to the profession, captures the intense cutthroat competition among explorers who seek full credit for their "I got there first" mentality.

During my college days back in 1957 I had the occasion to visit the Explorers Club in New York City. I simply walked in and was greeted by an ancient member, probably in his 90s. He gladly showed me around the club. "There's Prince Henry the Navigator's table," he said as we viewed a massive piece of furniture. Here was history before me, the actual working desk where the prince would meet with his explorers, poring over charts to plan voyages to the New World.

My host then waved his hand toward the adjacent wall. I noticed a long line of photographs and paintings of rugged looking men. "Here we have," he said, "the portraits of all our club presidents, arranged in chronological order during the time of their service." He then pointed to two photographs in particular, aligned side by side. "That is Frederick Cook," he said, "and next to him Robert Peary. Those two men hated each other."

By the way he spoke, and considering his advanced age, I am reasonably convinced my newfound friend did know both men and certainly knew their reputations from casual conversations around the Club. Famous or infamous as Arctic explorers, both claimed they were the first (Cook in 1908 and Peary in 1909) to set foot on the North Pole in two independent expeditions. For good measure,



Expeditions to the polar North do not necessarily foster close friendships. Rival explorers Frederick Cook (left) and Robert Peary (right) hated each other.

Cook further boasted he was the first to summit Alaska's Mount McKinley/Denali Peak in 1903. The self serving assertions of both men have been long in dispute, their "evidence" for their exploits deemed fake, pure humbug.

Cook and Peary, moreover, were not strangers to one another. They had been, in fact, one time associates. In the late 1890s both had participated in the same Arctic and Antarctica expeditions, Cook serving ably as team doctor. Their bitter feud later on fanned both a personal and a professional grudge. Whatever the facts, such open hostility in public besmirched the glory and honor of the profession of exploration, a nasty black mark. Our expedition ahead would not tolerate such rude behavior.

We were all ready to go. But for five straight days Garret in the morning would repeat the same news, "The pilot telephoned me that there is fog and freezing rain at Sachs Harbor on Banks Island. We will not fly in today."

The weather at Inuvik was usually sunny. Inuvik is some 325 miles southwest of Sachs Harbor, the only settlement on the island. We accepted the decision. "These pilots are professionals," Peter said, "They know the risks involved."

Such delays allowed us to explore the backcountry beyond Inuvik. One day we rode in a van to Tuktoyaktuk on a new year-round all weather road. The attraction at Tuk is the opportunity to view the pingos, domed-shaped mounds pushed up by the ice. Tuk village overlooks the Arctic Ocean.

The highlight of these excursions was a day cruise with Jimmy, an Inuit guide, on his boat. Jimmy skillfully steered his boat from Inuvik to visit Aklavik, a town in the Mackenzie Delta. In his baseball cap and wearing a warm jacket, Jimmy loves to show visitors his ancestral land. "I guide hunting parties in the fall for muskoxen, caribou and moose," he told me. "I also trap mink and lynx. All the game we shoot or catch is delicious to eat. I especially like burbot, a cod known as the poor man's lobster."

The hunting culture outlook prevails everywhere in the North. When I was having lunch at the Mackenzie Hotel in Inuvik a few years ago, an Inuit walked into the dining room. He greeted the head guide of our party as an old friend. I was amused when I saw the lettering on his T-shirt, "Vegetarian: Indian Word For Lousy Hunter." Perhaps this T-shirt brand of humor is a little offensive and crude but the message rings clear, the continued local reliance on hunting.



At Tuktoyaktuk, on the mainland, Arctic pingos rise above the tundra plain. These pushed up ice mounds, capped with rocks, are common in the Far North.

On the sixth day of our wait Garret announced to us, as we filed into breakfast, “We are going in today. The bush pilot just informed me over the phone.” All of us gave a cheer as if it were a historic day, and it was.

At 9:22am on Friday, June 21, 2019, we boarded a de Havilland DHC bush plane of Inuit owned Aklak Air at the Mike Zubko Airport, east Inuvik. A two hour flight would take us to Sachs Harbor. Once airborne, the plane flew over the Mackenzie Delta, an immense, seemingly endless sprawl of hundreds of lakes, ponds, streams and rivers in a flooded landscape.

As we approached the coast the scene abruptly changed into a continuous sheet of ice. The break-up had just barely begun with a few bergs floating free of the shelf ice. The fabled Northwest Passage gradually appeared as blue water, intensely bright blue with the sun illuminating its surface.



Aided by global warming, the fabled Northwest Passage is free of ice as we fly over Amundsen Strait. The annual break up has already started with bergs calving off the mainland shelf ice.

Roald Amundsen, the Norwegian explorer, had lent his name to Amundsen Strait. During his 1903-1906 expedition he made his first traverse of this passage-way by sea. Back then there was considerably more ice than present in today’s global warming environment.

The ice encrusted coast of Banks Island soon came into view. We landed at Sachs Harbor, its traditional name being Ikahuak from the Inuvialuktun, translated as “where you go across to.” The island’s economy is based on hunting, fishing and trapping.

We landed for refueling at an airstrip east of the village. Outside the prefab terminal building I greeted Mike, our bush pilot,

taking a cigarette break during our brief time on the ground. “I have an apprentice pilot along,” he said. Presently I met his copilot in training, a strikingly beautiful blonde lady in her 20s. “Hi, my name is Kim,” she said, smiling, “and I hail from Saskatchewan.”

I thought immediately of Alaska’s Kitty Banner, a legendary bush pilot during her days in the North. She flew climbers to the base camp of Mount McKinley. Kim could certainly emerge as Canada’s heroine bush pilot. I was delighted to see her pursuing this occupation, once almost exclusively dominated by men. Now women are becoming prominent in so many diverse fields after such a long wait and they often excel in these professions. Go for it, Kim!

Airborne again on a 55-minute flight north to our Thomsen put-in, I looked down below. I was startled. I felt almost a sense of recoil, viewing the dreary scene. The frozen

runway had been chosen because it is on a level stretch of land. No bulldozer had ever smoothed it out, perhaps just a little pick and shovel work at most.

Down over the right slope I had my first glimpse of the Thomsen, blue water with a continuous snow/ice belt along both banks. We unloaded quickly and stashed our gear in a pile. Mike and Kim revved up the engine and took off for their return flight. We were alone. We huddled together. We exhaled white puffs of air.

The tundra spread out as far as the eye could see. No trees blocked our view. With nothing to stop it, the savage wind blew relentlessly. I felt I had to say something, ridiculous or not, “Hurrah! No mosquitoes!”

With such a long checklist of essential clothing for the expedition we would not be threatened with hypothermia. I was warmly dressed, a set of long johns, wool shirt, wool sweater, two goose down jackets, one over the other, wool pants, wool gloves, wool socks, wool hat and high boots. I wore these garments daily for the entire trip. My PFC Life Preserver added another final layer of warmth. I was never frostbitten.

Cedar and two others set out to work immediately to pitch my tent, a tough job as the wind flipped the canvas back and forth with a snap. Finally the tent was pegged down, every stake in place.



Danger! High Wind Zone! With nothing to stop it, almost constant winds sweep across the treeless tundra, thwarting tent pitching.

Our crack team of nautical engineers then began to assemble the fold pack canoes. With plenty of muscle, patience and taps with a rubber mallet, the crew slipped the rods into their sockets and stretched the canvas shells into place. The first canoe required an hour and a half to assemble, the fourth and last, 20 minutes as the crew perfected its skills.



Canoe Construction 101 is a three credit course offered by the University of Thomsen River. Our engineering crew assembles four Ally canoes at our first campsite.

I always take great interest in the field equipment. Despite tremendous sales of outdoor gear in the United States and Canada, manufacturers in these two countries do not have a monopoly on these products. The Scandinavians, with their love of the outdoors, are leaders in quality canoes and tents. Our canoes were the Ally brand with a logo of a white star on a green background. Manufactured by Bergans of Norway, this firm, founded in 1908, invented and patented the first backpacks. Amundsen and Robert Scott used these packs on their expeditions. The Ally 811 model canoe which we used is 16'5" in length, the width 37". They weigh 46lbs and cost \$2,500 apiece. I have nothing but praise for the Ally canoes, they handled beautifully, stable and comfortable the entire trip.

As a rental on loan, my superb tent was manufactured by Hilleberg of Frösön, Sweden, the firm founded in 1971. Noted for its excellent quality and durability, the Hilleberg tent features a twin skin design with an erect fly sheet and inner layer.

I was assigned the Hilleberg Nallo 2 GT model, priced at \$880. It was money well spent, my tent did not rip and remained free of puncture holes. The product lived up to its advertising claims. "We test our materials and tents in the lab, with our wind machines and out in the field."

Two stories are relevant to this overall topic. A Finnish lady on the earlier Little Bell/Bell/Porcupine trip had brought along her own Hilleberg tent. The head guide suggested that she substitute one of his field tents as a courtesy, to save wear and tear on her equipment. As the guide's tent had been made by a rival company, she summarily refused, unwilling to compromise and held on to her Hilleberg. Why should she take a chance on a half wornout, probably inferior, product?

Another incident also emphasizes taking quality tents to avoid a breakdown in the wild. I recall that on an earlier 1988 Perry River Arctic canoeing trip Jim, the head guide and team doctor, had relied exclusively on a respected American tentmaker. The supplier in question, and whose name I shall not reveal, prided itself on delivering a close to custom made product sold in small quantities. These state of the art tents would be supposedly foolproof for our demanding two month long expedition.

Halfway through the trip Jim found out otherwise to his complete disgust. His tent fell apart with split seams and rents. "They (the manufacturer) will hear from me," he angrily avowed, "once we get out." And they did. The company, by the way, is now out of business. Good riddance!

The next morning, Saturday, June 22, 2019, and blessed with 24-hour a day sunlight in the Land of the Midnight Sun, we were ready for the great launch. Hooray! Hal-lelujah! Victory!

We slid our canoes over the snow and ice to our put-in. I did not slip. Cedar steadied the canoe alongside the frozen bank as I gingerly stepped in safely. I sat down in the seat and grasped my paddle. Cedar jumped in and pushed off as the canoe glided free from frozen ground. At long last I had achieved a long time goal, a descent of the Thomsen River.



Leave your Bermuda shorts and sandals back home. They are utterly useless here. Winter lingers on during late June and early July over the Thomsen River landscape. Spring is still weeks away.

The origin of this river's name intrigued me. What the Inuit had originally called this waterway had escaped my research. Looking ahead to more modern times, I learned that one Charles Thomsen, a sailor and a handyman, was a member of Stefansson's Canadian Arctic Expedition of 1913-1918. Stef, as he was known among friends, had split up his party into two teams.

In short, during the winter of 1916, Thomsen and Captain Peter Bernard were ordered by Stef to take new sleds, mail and supplies from the Banks Island base, north across McClure Strait to Stefansson's camp on Melville Island. They left with three heavily laden sleds for their trek across the ice. They never made it, disappearing during late December 1916 or January 1917.

A search party led by Aarnout Castel found the two sleds on the north coast of Banks Island during late May 1917. They made a grim discovery, two abandoned sleds and a note left by Bernard and Thomsen, dated December 22, 1916. Their brief message stated that they were short of food and dogs and were unable to make the rough ice crossing to Melville island. There was no sign of the two missing men. Castel continued northward on the north shore of Banks Island. Soon he discovered Thomsen's body. Bernard's remains were never found.

Stef did not forget his loyal, hard working friends and their sacrifices. He urged that two major rivers on Banks Island be named the Thomsen, the longest on the island, and the Bernard. Both were eventually and officially approved and grace the maps to this day.

Plagued with so many delays and a late start, we were compelled to scrap our original plan to paddle the entire length of the Thomsen. Take-out would have been at Castel Bay, named for the head of the rescue party at the extreme northern end of the Park. With these time limitations we would shorten the trip at Green Cabin. The reduced distance amounted to 45 miles downstream.

We latecomers were only paddling in the wakes left on the waters on rivers, lakes and ocean bays by kayaks propelled by the early Inuit hunters centuries earlier. The kayak, which they had invented, translates from the Inuvialuktun as "hunter's boat" or from the Greenland Eskimo variant, "small boat of skins." We both encountered the same conditions, cold, wind, snow and ice.

Our party wove in and out along the meanders with the snow covered banks rising to gray ridges in the distance. Around every turn we instantly glanced at the ridge-line coming into view. Would we spot any

muskoxen? We looked and looked the first day. No, there were no sightings. The elusive animals were not gun shy despite the ban on hunting in the park. They were simply on strike that day.

We approached Char Rapids ahead. The name honors the Arctic fish which thrive in these frigid waters, excellent eating, by the way, of their orange meat. "There is no danger here," Garret said, "and we will not have to stop for a scout. It's just fast water with no obstacles."

I whizzed through the riffles. The other canoes dashed downstream safely. The one and only rapids on the river was in back of us, as easy as that. Our reward for this feat was tenting, of course, at the Char Rapids campsite.

The next day we resumed our search for the muskoxen. My eyes were peeled to pick up any dark brown spot atop the ridgeline. If the lump remained stationary it had to be a boulder. If it should move it was most likely a muskoxen.

Look! A muskoxen! The lump moved! Another one moved! Soon a half dozen animals strolled in view. I felt a sudden surge, a thrill, as if spiritually back with the Inuit hunters. For them these sightings signaled utmost importance, food, tools, skins, tents, clothing, shoes and kayaks, a dependency on life itself. The concern for me was trivial by comparison, a recreational canoeist anxious to take photographs. But the same excitement was there, my heart beating in unison with the hunters'.



Don't shoot, otherwise you will be arrested. Once close to extinction, herds of muskoxen now roam at will in Aulavik National Park, threatened only by wolf packs and polar bears.

Easy paddling the next day brought us on a leisurely approach to the Slump Bend campsite. The mind and the hands were reacting automatically to execute the correct paddle stroke to complement the track of channel flow ahead, forward, sweep, backpaddle, eddy out, draw, cross draw and brace, and the best phrase of all, Garret's cry, "We'll beach here. Time for lunch."

The following day brought us to a tributary on river left. A climb up a sandy bank to level ground to pitch the tents for "home," the canoeist term for an evening's campsite. Throughout the entire trip we were always discovering that we were invariably encamping in the same exact sites the Inuit had utilized for generations. We had arrived at the Painted Sands site. Cedar pitched my tent, taking care to avoid any disturbance of the numerous stone/rock artifacts scattered across the tundra.

The next morning I lay groggily in my sleeping bag. All was quiet. I then heard what I thought was a sizzle sound, as if someone might be frying bacon in the cook tent. Coming to my senses, I finally grasped that snow pellets were bombarding the roof of my tent.

*Messing About in Boats*, September 2020 – 9



I refused to accept this snow shower and slid further down in my sleeping bag. Finally, and most reluctantly, I got up and soon crunched on foot across the ice flakes collecting on the ground enroute to the cook tent. Nature's own alarm clock, snow showers in the early morning, would awaken me for the next two days.

After breakfast we explored the spread of artifacts close to the tents. The rocks were usually covered with red ochre lichen, a bright and welcome contrast to the overall gray surroundings. Presently we ascended a rise to gain the ridge overlooking the valley. The panoramic view commands a perfect lookout for sighting muskoxen. We counted at least 12 tent rings along with fireplaces, pits and storage bin enclosures, all laid out in an organized pattern. This area obviously comprised a major encampment, even a village, for the nomadic hunters and their families. The immediacy was overwhelming as if the Inuits had left just a week ago.



The Honor System is in effect. Don't take any souvenirs. Legally protected, Inuit archaeological sites appear everywhere along the Thomsen River.

I could vividly imagine the whole scene in times past, the sighting, the chase, the throwing of spears, the kill, the skinning, the erecting of tents and the blazing fires to roast the meat. After the slaughter, families lived here in this temporary settlement as long as the food held out. Then they would move on to seek more game. The next year they would return to this familiar muskoxen rich overlook to hunt again.

This great hunting civilization, recorded in the artifacts, has passed. Gone are the days of bow and arrow and spears. The only muskoxen hunters today in the park are wolf packs. The area to the south outside the park is reserved for today's annual Inuit hunting parties, equipped with rifles, skidoos and ATVs. The yearly harvest averages 3,000 animals.

The next morning we packed up once more to paddle four miles to our last campsite of Green Cabin. Here we would take out and fly back to Inuvik. Our homeward bound paddle was easy.

We landed for a reconnaissance. Garret and the others bounded up a sandy slope to the ridge crest. I stayed with the canoes on voluntary guard duty.

"Dick! Dick!" Garret shouted to me. "I'll come down and get you. I don't want you to miss this!" He dashed down to assist me with his open arm for support. We quickly gained the ridge.

"Muskoxen! Muskoxen!" I exclaimed. There they were, seven or eight in number as these animals generally stay together in a small herd. They were only 30' away. The scene was so peaceful. A huge bull with his cows strolled in front of us. Their scraggly coats almost dragged on the ground as if they were wearing oversized horse blankets thrown over their backs. With their two layered coats, with "qiviut" comprising the soft underwool beneath the longer outerwool, the muskoxen easily survive in minus 30° winter temperatures. As usual, the Inuit word "uningmak," variously translated as "the animal with skin like a beard" or "the bearded one," provides the best description.

In the movies, these beasts always form a circle as a defense perimeter when threatened by enemies. So much for Hollywood and their overblown theatrics, the friendly muskoxen in front of us were more intent on grazing for their meal in this grassy vast pasture rather than being spooked by human beings. They totally ignored us. The endless tundra provided unlimited space for both of us.

Ahead was the half mile hike to Green Cabin. Garret had decided to leave the pulled up canoes on the beach and pick them up later on. I looked ahead to the uneven tussock covered ground. Garret did not leave me. Arm in arm we took short steps, one by one, with great precision.

The clumpy tussock, just like a springy sponge, rolled under my boots. A careless step would mean a lurch, loss of balance, even a fall. Despite the most well placed planting of my feet I could not avoid an occasional stumble as I struggled to regain my balance. Garret arrested my falls.

We soon arrived at Green Cabin, the halfway station on the river. The cabin is situated alongside a nearby airstrip. The field is on high enough ground to avoid flooding. Forest fires or lightning strikes on tall trees, of course, are unknown here, eliminating any damage to planes. I looked around, glancing at electronic antennae poles and steel boxes with navigational instruments. A wind flag slightly fluttered.

I entered the cabin and saw tables, benches, bunks and a stove. Other parties had left cans of food unopened. Why fly out these containers with their weight for no sensible purpose? Just leave the food as a Good Samaritan gesture for a future party, who knows, perhaps desperate for something to eat.



The guides later dismantled the canoes and stuffed them in their respective bags. The trip was over. We pitched our tents outside our cabin, taking our supper inside with the luxury of tables and benches.

All this talk about flying out the following morning turned out to be an illusion, a bag of tricks played on us by the weather.



Civilization at last! A hotel without hot showers. Green Cabin for canoeists rates high as a place of shelter. This modest building marks the end of our trip.

Like soldiers lined up to guard the ridges, muskoxen gaze at us paddlers far below on the river. Some 70,000 strong, they constitute the world's largest herd.



Ever patient, Garret called the bush pilot and in turn conveyed his news, "Fog and snow flurries. I cannot fly in today. Call back tomorrow." We received the same report the following day. We were cabin and tent bound until further notice.

Our time was not wasted. We hiked, played quiz games and conversed about future plans. Each guide spoke at length. "I shall lead a Mountain River canoeing trip in the Yukon for Black Feather in two weeks," Garret said. Michelle was also committed, "I shall return to Inuvik for resupply," she said, "and meet up with Margaret, another guide. We'll fly back for a second Thomsen River paddle." Cedar was also ambitious. "I'll be heading back to Antarctica for another season," he said. We four guests looked ahead for new Arctic river challenges during the 2020 season. If I hadn't heard such talk, I would have known that something was wrong.



Listeners beware. It's Tall Tale Time! Inside our cozy cook tent with our plates heaping with food, we relate stories of past trips and plan future expeditions.

The third day of waiting resulted in another unexpected wakeup call. I was awakened, or so I thought, by wind blowing crazily at the rear of my tent. A couple of stakes must have pulled loose, with the wind roaring through an open flap. I dressed hastily to investigate. Cedar was standing outside with his camera. "Dick," he said. "Take a look at this picture. A wolf was howling and brushing alongside your tent." The image of an

adult wolf came into view, depicting a ravenous animal scurrying around for food. "I'm not worried," I said to Cedar. "I'm too old and too tough to eat."

This incident perhaps foreshadowed a good omen. Upon consulting with the bush pilot, Garret greeted us at Green Cabin. "We are flying out today!" All of us cheered.

In the mixed blue and cloudy gray sky, the plane circled around on its approach for a clear shot landing. A young lady pilot hopped down on the metal ladder rungs to the ground, followed by her assistant lady copilot. I was hoping to see Kim again but that would have to be another time. The party aboard, six members of Parks Canada, also disembarked. They would paddle north to Castlet Bay.

"Dick, Dick," someone yelled. How in the world would someone recognize me in this most remote place? I walked over to one of the newcomers. "Who is calling me?" I asked in a low voice. "It's Tyler," someone answered and gestured in his direction. I was delighted to see an athletic, middle aged man. He was wearing sunglasses and sporting a goatee, otherwise I would have recognized him immediately. With big grins, we shook hands. Tyler was along as the official Parks Canada photographer, snapping pictures.

Tyler and I had met four years earlier on Yukon's Firth River, which flows north into the Beaufort Sea on the Arctic Ocean. He was one of the guides on that expedition. Crazy as the Arctic seems to affect people, he had braved the cold for a quick dip, avoiding the bergs. I had been content to watch.

His career as a commercial photographer has taken him frequently on safari in Africa. I loved his stories about his encounters with elephants and hyenas. We kept in touch through correspondence. "Dick, I have always read your Arctic expedition accounts to my children," he said. I enjoyed the compliment.



Heaven forbid! No room for a piano. Given weight limitations, heavy excess baggage is not allowed aboard bush plane flights. All our necessary supplies are stacked in a pile as we watch the pilot take off for Inuvik



"See you on the river," is a time honored farewell in the canoeing world. The expedition members then break up to return to the real world, if indeed there is such a place. Most of the time, especially on these end of the earth type of trips, you rarely, if ever, see one another again. Hopefully Tyler and I shall beat the odds for a third meeting, the Arctic, Africa or wherever. I am counting on it.

The horizon, with the river flowing north of Green Cabin, haunted me to complete this cut short pilgrimage we originally had set out to accomplish. Mountaineers agonize over the same compulsion. When they have to turn back short of the summit, usually battling severe weather conditions, they are determined to regroup and to wrap up this unfinished business. Our entire Thomsen River party felt the same way.

This expedition has meant much more to me than a routine check off your list river journey. Compared to reading any book, looking at a movie or photograph or listening to any lecture or conversation, I had experienced for myself the actual Inuit nomadic hunting lifestyle under identical conditions in this harsh and beautiful land. I promise to return. The muskoxen are waiting for me.

### Practical Information

Regarding the risks inherent in this expedition, I do not think my account is too exaggerated or far fetched. The canoeing is actually easy, but that is beside the point. The Thomsen demands the utmost respect, considering its extreme isolation, totally unpredictable weather and its complex logistics. Taking into account its necessary bush plane flights, the trip is costly and therefore is not for the financially faint of heart.

Unless someone is a seasoned wilderness canoeist, I most emphatically recommend guide service. The Black Feather outfit, in business for over 40 years, is known for its excellent leadership and outstanding record:

Black Feather  
The Wilderness Adventure Company  
250 McNaught Rd, Seguin, ONT  
CANADA P2A 0B2  
Email: [info@blackfeather.com](mailto:info@blackfeather.com)  
Phone: 1-888-849-7668  
Fax: 1-705-746-7048

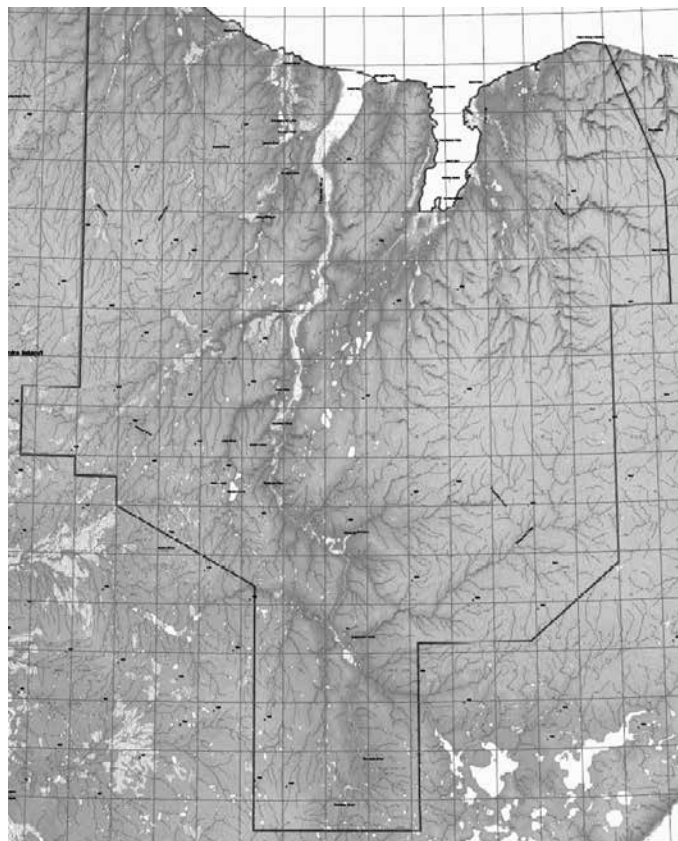


Steady! Watch your step! Plant your feet safely! Hikes over tussock require utmost caution, bedeviled with loose footing, slipping, and sliding, otherwise one might turn an ankle.



Northward Ho! Paddling around the next bend of the Thomsen, we always feel a sense of excitement and discovery. Our eyes scan the ridges for muskoxen sightings.

Aulavik National Park.



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## Meandering the Texas Coast

By Michael Beebe

### Engine Running

Me on the foredeck gathering in the jib, it's blowing pretty good, gusts to 25mph, not tethered in, not wearing a PFD, alone, don't try this at home. I shouldn't try this stuff but I keep doing it. I'm trying to get out into the bay far enough to gather some sea room so when I do turn off the outboard I've enough room to sort things out. The jib came loose and I had to go forward.

I shared the above with my wife, she was listening, "The engine was running? That's dangerous!" she said.

"Yes," I admitted and continued with the day's happening on the water. I will be hearing about this from far and wide, children won't be allowed to read of my exploits. I'll be hearing from hardly knows, to don't knows and that's fine. I've considered that aspect already. This can be put in the section of "I've learned about boating from this."

My ride this afternoon was a 26' MacGregor "D," more than twice as long as my little *Red Top*. The deal in getting this MacGregor was I'd sell another one I acquired a few weeks before, a 22' MacGregor project. Sell or give away. I just may be selling the both of em. It was hard today. Aransas Bay was pretty bumpy, the boat handled good when I got the main up with two reefs in and the working jib. She scooted right along. Not very wet, but still hard. I was worn out and I was only out there about an hour and a half.

I doused the main out in the bay to see how she'd sail with jib alone, pretty good. Today was the first I've used an outboard in two or three years. Coming back in to the dock the jib alone wouldn't do it and now downwind are the city docks with too many boats, I was bound to hit someone if I didn't do something quick.

Start the outboard, in the melee I turn toward the outboard and stared at it. I raise both hands looking at it and my mind's a blank. All this in a blink of an eye. My memory kicks in and the outboard starts right off. But now I miss the chosen dock and I have to use a shallow one, one hand on the outboard, the other hand 6' forward grabbing the line to raise the daggerboard, that's the "D" on this MacGregor 26D. If I hit the ramp I'd hate to think of the problems.

Shutting off the engine and getting the board raised, getting dock line back on starboard/windward side of dock, getting fenders set while the jib is shaking and flapping trying to fling my eyeglasses into the water. I was spent. It took me over an hour and half to put this boat away on its trailer and get everything stowed.

So what did I learn? Sell 'em, sell 'em both. Stay with the sailing dinghies. I could put the 26D in the water, but now since Harvey blew through here the marina wants insurance. I'd have to paint the bottom with

anti fouling, another expense, then still having to clean the bottom from time to time.

Nah, no thanks. Besides, I think Linda will like canoe sailing just fine, I know I will.

### Sometimes the Sail is Short

*Red Top*, sunny, some clouds, wind SE 15 to 18, gusts to 23, nice ride. Out into Aransas Bay toward Paul's Mott direction. Tug and barge coming south, another going north from ICW in front of Cove Harbour, both seemingly putting a squeeze on me. I turned north, went behind southbound tug, figuring with its speed that would be the best approach, giving northbound tug plenty of room. Was about halfway across the bay when this was going on.

Earlier both lines holding the forward end of the boom let go at the same time, that was a first. I wasn't too far out into the bay when this happened. Caught me by surprise. Down came the sail, helped by me. Downwind was an unrepaired remnant of a pier destroyed by Hurricane Harvey three years ago. Drifting into it wouldn't be fun. Throw out the anchor and start working on sail. Notice am still drifting, anchor hasn't grabbed yet, bummer.

Throw out second anchor, it's worthless, too short of rode, gonna take care of that when this is over crosses my mind. The first anchor grabs and holds, it is a supreme, a good anchor. In the wind and the chop I retie the two lines and manage to stay aboard, the bow took a couple of dips, I thought it was going under. While doing this I'm on top of *Red Top*'s small cabin trying to stay put. I was tethered to the boat this time. A powerboater was standing by, he soon left. Left kind of early I thought to myself.

Another thing I might as well throw in here, when I stop just leaving the harbour to shorten sail, I usually use the leeboards and rudder to hold position close to the island bank in front of the harbour mouth. Didn't work this time so I anchored. After setting the reefed sail, off I go, wondering what's the problem. The first "duh" of the day.

Looking around for my line of escape from the old pier, there are two or three others but they end much closer to the beach. With the anchor hanging off the port bow, that will give me the direction I want as I pull in the anchor. New paint, ugh. I had just painted *Red Top* and now was concerned about any possible fresh dings and scrapes being caused by retrieving the anchor. And, of course, up it comes covered with smelly bottom mud. I have a few moments to rinse the anchor before bringing it aboard, did not get all the mud off, oh well, small price. Leeboard down, pull in main sheet and off we go.

It didn't end there, later at the dock the dock line from the bow came loose. Unbe-

lievable! After the tugs, I sailed southwest on a close beat, *Red Top* did well. Uphill into strong SE, he did good.

I thought about the fiasco out on the water earlier. It didn't bother me. Never thought of coming in and calling it a day then, had I done so I'd never have met those two tugs in an awkward position. The three things, lines letting loose while sailing, the tug boat squeeze and the dock line, then the fish bait guy says, "How come you come back in so soon, too hot?"

"Nah," I said, "Sometimes the sail is short."

### "Mighty Good Navigation"

*Red Top* left dock no reef, any more wind and a reef would have made sense. South on the ICW almost to Palm Harbour, the front came through, no rain, missed that, but now the wind was gusting to 3mph. Tried to get close to Spoil Island, threw out anchor, no grab all the way across the channel. Finally it grabs in knee deep water on the lee shore, no waves though.

Sit for a while and rest, hoping wind will calm down, no luck. So shorten sail and sail off the shallows. Took almost a hundred yards to get into deep enough water that the leeboard would bite better. With a tug and barge behind me and another coming towards me with his push, the first one stopped and took off some of the pressure I was feeling.

In front of Palm Harbour I was able to come about and put myself in a favorable position for the first tug coming south. The other had already passed on by. Somewhere out there the boom slapped my head/ear, must have been when I was coming about. I wanted to sit for a spell and hold my ear but couldn't.

Getting back into Cove Harbour I notice a tug with its barge leaving its dock. Ducking behind two moored barges that were tied off to the bulkhead, I waited a bit seeing which way this tug was leaving. Giving me about 20 or 30 yards off the corner of the bulkhead, I sail on by with the tug off to my starboard, and hugging the corner.

Coming into the dock, I swing around and get off on the starboard side and sit down on the dock's edge. A fellow says, "mighty good navigation." I thanked him and held my words about the experience just 30 minutes prior.

PS: Earlier in the morning the wind was almost non existent, gusted up to 3mph, then after dinner, sitting at the table looking across the street, some neighbor has a smoker going and I notice the smoke rising in clouds, the wind had dropped again to almost nothing.

On a hot June summer day, we joined forces with one of our loyal *ACK* subscribers and his wife, who were venturing out from their quarantine HQ in western Mass. The trip was up the Annisquam River out of Gloucester, Mass.

Paul and Laurel Foster-Moore are frequent travelers to all places kayak. In 2018, Paul kayaked in remote Alaska and lived to write about it (*ACK* Oct. 2018, Vol. 27, #7). Already this year, they paddled and camped on Little Tupper Lake in the Adirondacks (the best site with the high bluff) with friends and declared it a social distancing success. They had been paddling in Duxbury the day before they joined us with yet more friends, and had trips planned to the Muscle Ridge Islands in July (Lobster Buoy Campground) and Stonington in August (Old Quarry Campground, which has just re-opened), with required testing. Maine's rule to enter the state is a CV19-free test within 72 hours.

Like us, they are cautious. We all wore masks at the meet-and-greet, not dropping them until well out on the water. We got there early. We took turns launching. No one used the porta-potty. We kept our distance on the water, although sometimes we closed in dodging the parade of powerboats. We did not stretch legs or stop for lunch. We turned around at a conservative interval. We took a route that followed the shore. After the paddle, we elbow-bumped goodbyes from 6' away. We did not go out for seafood. All in all a great success.

We had the first extended in-person conversations with other people outside immediate family (our daughter and her boyfriend) since March. We covered the usual: how to convert a van for camping, saving Old Quarry Campground, best restaurants (in better times), all paddle-power boats in our respective fleets, where we like to paddle, jet ski behavior, the Confederacy, drysuits, best senior memory lapses, and what hiking in the Trinity Mountains in northern California is like (great!). In short, paddling in a pandemic is not only possible; it leads to happiness. Certainly we felt that way after the end of the day, as in life has returned to normal in some ways.

It did take some planning. First decision was where to launch. David and I have been relying on our local put-in down the hill, which is tide dependent and mucky at the best of times, so we have been restricted to three-hour paddles max or risk getting a foot stuck in the mud just as we are heaving the boat onto the bank.

The put-ins in Ipswich are complicated. Pavilion Beach was closed to non-residents, and I witnessed a happy beach goer get a \$30 ticket the day before on my reconnaissance trip. Town wharf has been closed for repairs, and the trailers were overflow parking at Town Hall, too much chaos. Lending our other car with a town sticker and racks and shifting their boat, too complicated. What we needed was a launch spot that had plenty of parking, a separate launch spot for trailers and kayaks.

I checked out Essex, OK, with overflow parking next to the Police Station. I knew of Stone Pier, a good launch site in the Jones River that leads to the Annisquam, but I recalled dicey launching at low tide. Lanes Cove, a favorite, was uncertain for non-resident parking (it turned out to be fine.) A favorite launch in Essex has shut down for out-of-towners. This is not Maine, nor is it Cape Cod, which is very restrictive in summer.

## Covid Paddling And the Pursuit of Happiness

By Tamsin Venn – Photos by Tamsin Venn  
Reprinted from *Atlantic Coastal Kayaker*

Gloucester's Dunfudgen Landing behind the high school turned out to be fine. Plus the \$8 fee is waived for hand-carried boats on the rocky beach beside the ramp. Normally I avoid the concrete ramp like the plague. This landing has 48 trailer spaces and overflow parking and even more parking at the high school.

This is the launch spot for the Blackburn Challenge, the 20-mile race around Cape Ann, which was canceled this July. I had not launched here since my last Blackburn, about 20 years ago! I had a ghostly churn in my stomach as we passed the basin where the race starts.

The first great news was that Paul and Laurel showed up with their Necky Nootka (out of their varied fleet), which they had actually found in *ACK*'s classifieds. The owner lived right in their town. We usually avoid our Nootka, because we prefer being in our own boats. Besides, as we age, our spindly arms find it harder and harder to lift the boat onto the car. How is that for ageism? ("Speak for yourself," grumps David.)

Paul and Laurel had no such problem, thanks in large part to Paul's ingenious rolling pin device. Place the bow up into the wood frame on the car roof, two people pick up the stern and roll the kayak onto the roof over a padded rolling pin. "We had an extra rolling pin lying around and didn't know what to do with it," says Laurel. Seriously this is genius.

It was so gratifying to see someone else using their Nootka. We both estimated the average weight of our Nootkas, their's at 80lbs, and ours at 100lbs (possibly water seepage into the fiberglass from nicks making it heavier). How do you weigh this boat? Paul was going to put Laurel on the bathroom scale and have her hold the boat up.

The masked fee collector was directing the trailers down the ramp, obviously alert to the challenges the inexperienced might face. He was not there for the return in the afternoon, however. The boater with the modified gin palace had a hard time getting his trailer down the ramp, nearly ramming it into the post three times. Better than Netflix.

We parked our cars by the ramp, and took the boats and gear down to the water, a dicey task, as the first bit of the free access was a sloping wall of large stone chunks with spaces between, just waiting to grab an ankle. We then moved the cars to the high school parking lot, which has a ton of park-

ing spaces, great for social distancing. As we all know, do not park in the deep trailer spaces. Most people at the ramp were wearing masks. This is Massachusetts, which has a high rate of compliance. Massachusetts is not Texas or Florida.

Leaving our cars and cares behind, off we set down the Annisquam. The last time I did this was about 6am for the start of the Blackburn about 20 years before. What a difference a summer Saturday at 11am makes. It was a procession of motorboats down toward the sea, which would exponentially increase in the afternoon in reverse. Red "nun" and green "can" buoys dotted the channel, so we zig-zagged to avoid boats and shallow water, as it was close to low tide.

When navigating a channel, the saying, "red, right, returning", means boats keep the red nuns to their right when returning up channel. Outbound, the buoys are reversed: green, right, going. However, for kayaks the best rule is, "Stay the hell out of the channel." Despite all our efforts, and David's channel paranoia, formed in his time teaching Out-



Paddling under the Rt 128 bridge while avoiding the conga line of motorboats coming upchannel.

You can't accuse Gloucesterans of being mealy-mouthed.



Tammy paddles to the south of the Annisquam lighthouse. Photo by David Eden.





ward Bound sea kayak courses, the wandering channel and extensive shallows at low tide made it an effort to keep ourselves well clear of the conga lines of motor boats.

One truism I find in my years of kayaking is that it is always best to go out with “guests.” They usually get the timing of the tides right. The results were magnificent. We sailed out with the outgoing tide and zoomed back in with the incoming. The southwest wind 5-10mph never really did more than cool us. The sky hung overcast but no telltale signs of possible rain and T-storms that the National Weather Service had predicted by the afternoon. No high cirrus clouds, no cumulus clouds ahead of the storm, no wind shifts.

It sprinkled for three seconds when we got back to the landing at 3pm and that was it. The weather service has just been wrong lately. All day we had the anxiety of a possible T-storm with high winds hanging over us and nothing happened, but better that than being caught off guard.



Laurel and Paul in their Nootka in Lanes Cove. They are the third owners of this boat and it is in fabulous shape.

### Getting There

From Rt 128 N, cross the high bridge over the Annisquam River. At the first roundabout, take the first exit right-of-way onto Washington Street. At 0.3 miles, turn right onto Centennial Avenue. At 0.4 mi, turn right onto Leslie O Johnson Road/Blynman Street. The high school is directly in front of you. Follow the parking lot around to the right and turn left to reach the ramp. Pass the ramp and stop as close to your right as possible to give vehicles with trailers room to swing onto the ramp. Unload and go back to find a parking space. There are a couple of overflow lots, and you can also park in the high school lot. DO NOT park in one of the long spaces reserved for vehicles with trailers.

Alternate route from Rt 128 N. Slightly shorter, but traffic can build up as you approach Rt. 127, as the drawbridge is sometimes up for boats passing through the Blynman Canal, which cross just before the left turn onto Centennial Avenue:

Exit 14 onto Rt 133/Essex Road. Turn right at the bottom of the ramp. At 9.1 miles, 133 ends. Bear left onto Rt 127/Western Avenue. At 0.2 mi, turn left onto Centennial Avenue. At 0.2 mi turn left onto Leslie O. Johnson Road. If you reach Lincoln Avenue, you’ve gone too far.



Paul and Laurel paddle along the “Gold Coast” of Annisquam’s western shore.

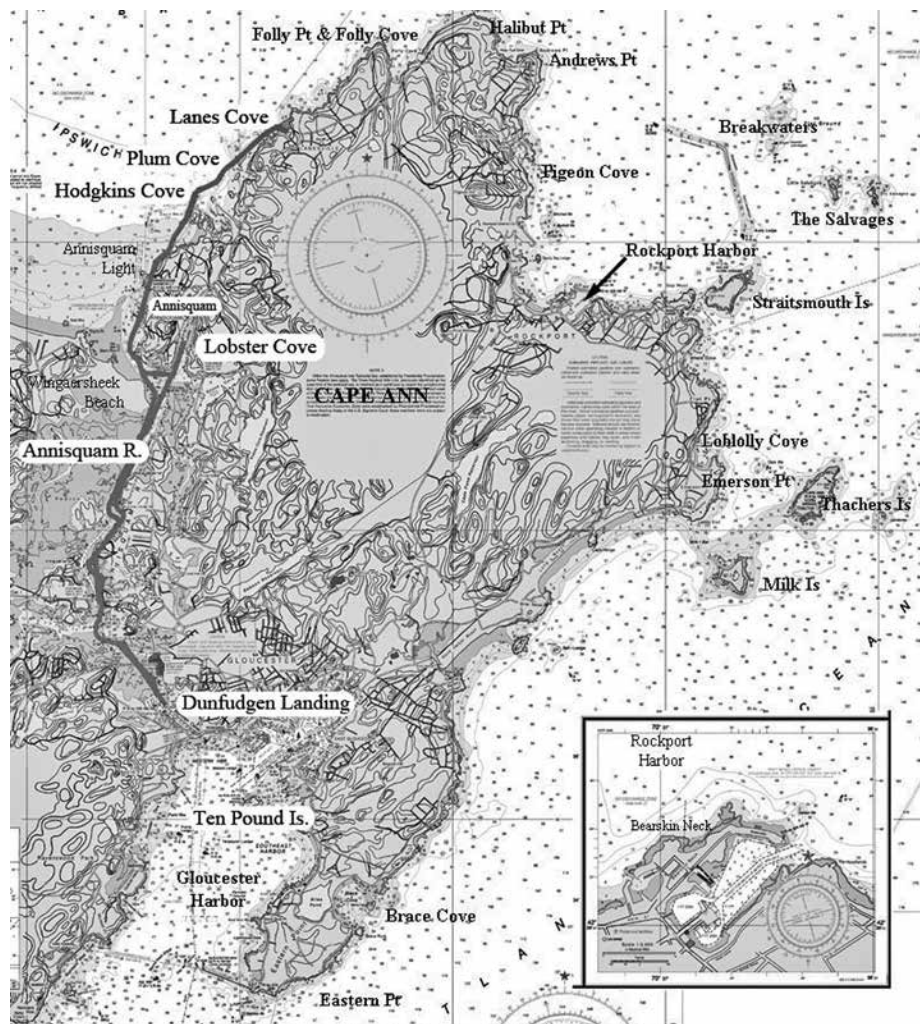
The Annisquam River, lined by summer shingle houses, docks and moorings, has a long stretch of Wingaersheek beach to our left, full of couples and families with dogs, picnics, swimmers, anglers. Rules were definitely being flouted on this hot June summer day, with motorboaters lined up next to each other quarantining, letting off steam from months of being cooped up.

Most surprising was the osprey perched in its nest, listening to a boat’s blasting rendition of some top-40 hit, as it motored slowly by, its occupants toasting beers. Maybe it had ear plugs.

We paddled down the lovely Annisquam, past Annisquam Light, Hodgkins Cove, Plum Cove, into Lane’s Cove, then exited Lane’s Cove and paddled back the way we came. We poked our noses into the lovely Lobster Cove and admired the wooden watercraft. Total distance: 12 miles. That’s nearly half a Blackburn.



Heading back from our turn around at Lanes Cove.



Day 1: Jamie and I have had a long day and are now moored at a really nice pier that pokes out into the same fetch we took several hours to transit earlier today. Apparently the wind is blowing someplace to the north. We're lurching around quite a bit. We represent 25% of a four boat expedition to circumnavigate a large quantity of Idaho drinking water, Lake Coeur d'Alene, and we're now at the boat-in campground at Mowery Point to be specific.



We all sat around a flattened tent space and practiced the social distancing this cruise is set up to follow. So far it's been a reasonable alternative to sitting closer around a picnic table or campfire. Neither Jamie nor I have "gotten out" much for the majority of this year. Nice to just sit and talk.

The rest of the fleet is planning to retrace *Walkabout's* track tomorrow from south to north but we might continue a mile or two on farther south before following the flock, remembering an ice cream stand we stopped at last year.

# The View from Almost Canada by Dan Rogers

## A Twofer Cruise

Two Lakes, Five Days  
100 Nautical Miles at 5 Knots

Day Two: Another long day. The other boats sailed most of the way while we explored, checked out anchorages and moorage along the way, proceeding in our newly dual stinkpotterly way.



Summer landed with both feet today, hot and the place getting busier and busier. We are all pierside in a nice boat-in campground like last night. Social hour on the pier. Everybody brought folding chairs. Everybody brought masks. A small island of sanity amid a larger sea of denial and outright ignorance, folks making the best of it.



The other three boats expect to spend a couple or three more days here on the lake. Jamie and I are going to pull stakes in the morning and head back to the ramp. Hot weather weekend likely gonna get crowded back at the ramp we launched from. We've had a nice outing and shouldn't unnecessarily add to everybody else's burden. Yet to be seen, likely a busy day at the ramp and on the lake. Lights out.

Day Three: An early reveille and we slipped our moorings as silently as we could by about 0545. We had the lake pretty much to ourselves and *Rudy's* gastankustosparkusinterruptus has somewhat subsided, a fairly common malady with carbureted engines.

Nice morning to be out. The ragboats will get a modest breeze for their delayed departure. They will likely have several more delightful gatherings at this or that moorage/anchorage over the weekend. At the ramp we got our wish. There was ONE BOAT launching and NO activity in the parking lot. We had time to tie things down, and put things away. Time to head for the barn and get ready for the next one.



We had pretty much run off from a delightful opportunity to cruise along with a small group of ragboats peopled by folks who actually read books and think about stuff in more than soundbites. We concluded that we are just inexplicably introverts. We run away from crowds. And with Covid 19 stalking for yet more human hosts, a crowd of people out to enjoy the sunshine and water on this, the last weekend in June, seemed inevitable at the launch ramp on Coeur d'Alene. Turns out we not only beat the crowds, we had the place just about all to ourselves. Soooo we pulled *Walkabout* up onto *Mr Brogans* and decamped. This while our travelling companions were still asleep at the pier in Mica Bay. We got home and Kate pointed out, rightly, we were days ahead of schedule. Sooooo.



Before the day was out, barely, we hooked back up and headed back out. We spent the remaining dark hours parked in the rest stop where the main drag to Priest Lake splits off into routes up both east and west sides. Nobody else there.

We were up and moving by around zero five. Launched, and the *Suzi* 'n *Rudy* show was off to the races. We were up too early in our ongoing effort to avoid human contact at launch ramps, so all we did was run around the corner to the Scout Camp Beach. That's what we called it when my scout troop came here to camp in the snow back in junior high school. Still looks about like it did 60 years ago. We've been showing up here every week erso since the initial lockdown ended.



Dunno if we'll have much to eat, we sort of just shoved off, but we've got as many as three days' liberty. Full gas tanks, a whole bunch of beaches to go visit and nobody knows where we are and nobody cares where we go. Well, I guess we should go do some poking around.



Day Four: At the far end of the lake there's this coffee shop that we can tie up next to where Andy Coolin's store stood for over a hundred years. Leonard Paul ran it for a half century. His name is still on the sign. The store's gone now but there's a newish coffee shop that has wifi. We just might put on our masks and duck in there for one of their deli sandwiches, mebbe catch up on email. We're introverts, not hermits. Underway.

Well, we're rocking and rolling around the bow anchor off the "lee side" of Kalispell Island. We'd already wandered up past Cape Horn, through the deep but twisty narrows bordering Eight Mile Island, circuted Cavanaugh Bay. I considered finding a spot to tie

up over at the Blue Diamond ramp but Carolyn can get a bit obstreperous with folks who don't "ask first." To keep our social distance we'd have to tie up, hike a mile back to the Big House, ask and by then...

So we were off to the northwest and checked out the lee side of Bartoo Island. We gave a wide berth to the campers with their tents and toonboats. Just inside the point is a really tight little crescent beach, picnic table and fire pit and some kinda sign on a post. I couldn't read it, quite. The southerly had been making up for an hour or so and the swell was arcing around the point. I figured I needed to lay the bow hook in such a way to allow for a swing to the evening likely northerly just in case we decided to spend the night.

We got sitchurated, bow hook pretty far offshore, kedge finally set and pulling the stern in to the beach when I could finally make out what was on that sign, "Fee Area Reserved." It's always hard to imagine who might show up and when and with what sort of attitude about somebody else's anchor line. So, after about a half hour we pulled stakes and headed around to another spot we like.

There's a submerged sand spit directly athwart the southerly. This time we set the hook up against the spit and drifted down to allow the figure eight to schlep us closer to the beach. Actually, make that between the rocks while keeping the port bow quartering into the slop coming across the spit. Just when we got the bow hook in a happy spot and attempted to twist and back in across the wind and swell, here they came.

A humungus toonboat steamed directly across the anchor rode and, without even recognizing our existence, a fat guy in a wife beater T-shirt and MAGA hat on backwards rammed his, er, vessel up on the sand spit and sent the couple of ladies aboard up the hill to the facilities. By the time they were ready to shove off again I was swinging at short stay, both kedges aboard and ready to shove off myself just as soon as they noticed me swinging around behind their 250hp outboard that was thrashing in the tilted position, attempting to wrest that huge assemblage from the sand spit. I gave 'em a friendly toot on the whistle and everybody except Mr MAGA smiled and waved.

That's why we ended up rolling around in the partial lee of yet another island. This time I had to twist several times and run aft to set the kedge. We used both big and little Danforths for that task. No chain to make it easier to heave the thing or drag it around in a small boat. Often that stern kedge just doesn't want to grab what it is that I want it to grab. It seemed reasonable to stay put and make lunch so here we were, rolling and pitching.



Later on, as it was coming on dark, rain clouds had been marching lock step over the mountains to the west. We'd visited two more beaches in the interim. First came our new little hideyhole just south of Elkins Resort on the upper lobe of Reeder Bay. It's Forest Service

land with the old pack trail looping down to the water about there. The trail is in bad shape and there isn't a road on that side of Lakeview Mountain. As overgrown and tangled as it was up from the beach, I didn't feel especially thrilled at that being our "only option" at zero dark thirty in a likely downpour. Following that hunch, I rechecked the bear spray and told myself I'd remember how to pull the pin and get off a "final act of defiance" should we find ourselves in harm's way.

After a meal of boatleftovers we moved the several miles back to where we started the day out, the Scout Camp Beach. Reasonable shelter from both north and south. A steep, gravel beach. A 10'-15' wide "buffer zone." With the thunder bumpers closing in I was hoping this was our snuggery for the evening.

So far we've moved on a whim, stayed on inertia and generally behaved like we were on Island Time. We're not real good at it but I'm told it's an acquired taste.

An hour or two later we were on our second squall, the trees whipping around and the wind is in the NE, the one bad vector for this anchorage. I reset the bow hook farther out, took in the beach anchor and we are dancing a jig.

And, then all hell broke loose!



I kept looking off to weather. I figured we had about ten minutes to decide if we were gonna stay or cut and run, it took me about 30 seconds to get power up and break the hook out. In that half minute it went from ripples to chop to breakers.

Still light enough to be properly frightened by what was blowing in from the north I gave her turns for about 6mph so as to have a little reserve and to encourage *Rudy* to stay on line, he's due for a fuel pump replacement I've concluded.

One of the things I ALWAYS do is determine a reasonable storm management strategy and a general plan for bugging out. It doesn't happen often but tonight it sure did. We ran for Granite Creek. At one point we were surfing at over 9mph, with no additional throttle about where the creek current met the mare's tails thrashing their way all the way from the Thorofare.

And then, in less than 45 minutes, the last of the light showed almost calm. We had no desire to leave the float, not until first light anyhow. I had been steering with both hands and bracing to stay in the helm chair, as it was.

If this had all whopped up an hour or two later I suspect we would have landed on the beach in the dark. In the 60 years I've been coming to this place, this was the worst I've seen. I had been listening to the Synthetic Norwegian minutes before and he didn't offer even the slightest clue.

A close one, eh?



Day Five: There is but one thing to do, get back on the horse. I'd been muddling over what might have gone wrong if we were with other boats, other boats that I had some sort of responsibility for. I think it would have been a jumble of boats in the surf. *Walkabout* was on a reasonable scope but we couldn't veer another foot. There's sand and gravel in close along most of these littorals. Then it morphs to rocks and boulders that don't offer much purchase for an anchor.

We were also out looking for alternative emergency anchorages this morning. I normally eschew the Rich Guy House Side and stay on the public side. Quite simply, we were already in the best hideyhole from a northerly gale, other than being back on the trailer, that is.



There is this stretch of beach running just west of Canoe Point that is posted as private but open to the riff raff to "use" during hours of daylight only. Funny how that works. Anyhow, we took station at the extreme end, away from the last of the RGHS.

I had seen her on the way in, some sort of Cornish Crabber in plywood. At the "frontier" RGH pier we walked on up and looked her over, from an appropriate distance, being the essence of riff raff. A very interesting boat.



On the way out I came in close to get some pix. I could see the master of the manse up on his verandah, keeping an eye on us. I shouted at him a question, "Bolger?" He shouted something back, likely neither of

us had our hearing aids inserted. I waved and blew a salute and began to idle away. A glance astern revealed that he had come down to the pier. I twisted around and came in close enough for a gam.



I drifted in close for a half hour. I pulled out my mask and he apologized for not having his. Always a good sign, these days. We talked about boats, people we knew in common, books we've read, the state of the union and such. Then a cloudburst sent him running for the castle. We were invited back. I suppose in normal times he would have jumped aboard *WaB* and continued our discussion. Social distancing on cruises are quite different from what we think of as "normal."

One thing he said was that he has an unfinished Elliot Bay hull and the steam machinery and figures if he survives the pandemic, he's gonna stop procrastinating. A common theme.

We picked a lunch stop off Shipman Point, mebbe tucked just inside the wind line if the normal southerly makes up. If not, we've already got Plan B worked out.

Well, we wandered off and sashayed on south to the narrows and on over to the resort for a hamburger. Silly me, I figured that since the lake had been almost devoid of boat traffic on this end of June Sunday that I could sneak in and order something, let's just say that I was the only one wearing a mask or even attempting to maintain a fathom clearance. I stood in a corner like the alien everybody saw me as and bolted just as soon as I could. We have to return to the rez tomorrow, so for the last anchorage of this cruise I picked the one and only spot on this lake with protection from just about every "normal" wind direction. We're on three anchors, bow out on lotsa scope.



Day Six: Well, we didn't move an inch overnight. In a world where folks just run their toonboats up on the sand and break out another beer, we proly appear a bit extreme. It's Monday, we have the lake to ourselves. We've got *Suzi* and *Rudy* singing in pretty good harmony between bouts of emphysema from the starboard pod at least, running at about 6mph.

We're taking a closer look at potential hideyholes with public beaches here on the more populous south end. They exist, but

it's a matter of whether weather permits. The Tyee Coffee Shop was sorta on the loop so we stopped. The guest slips were empty. I went into the coffee shop, decided that as the only alien landed with Covid mask I would remain as obsequious as possible.

It was only ten, the sandwich we came for can only be ordered after eleven, and that coffee with cream, what did I want in it, cream, oh well, just a moment and so forth. The reason for pulling in here was the wif. None of my "devices" seem to remember the drill. I don't think I'll be going back into that alien deportation station. Mebbe folks like us should just go back to sea and keep our own company.



The Real Coolin has been yuppified, subdivided and turned mostly to California plastic. The old restaurant is still there under peeling paint and keep out signs. The old pier is gone. I suppose it's just holding the place for some more condos. Time to get back underway.

Today is also return to the rez day and pretty much for the first time in about 60nm of travel on Priest Lake, the sky is blue and wind light. There was this family group that showed up and loaded a humungus amount of dock building stuff. They came in a toonboat and one of the kids actually brought her alongside. Nice!

We were about a third of the way back from Coolin to the ramp at Granite Creek and peering at the island close aboard to port. We can check it out.

What a find! Been right on by here lotsa times, the north side of a completely unpeopled island. Well, there is that historical building cabin that is sorta a partnership between some gov't entity and the original family (descendants.) Other than that, here we are on Eight Mile Island. Ablutions, shaves and fresh canvas for them what don't argue about ablutions.





Just as food, fuel and time have run out I do think we have hit that rhythm. We could likely just stay out here until the snow flies now. No, we can't. If we could, well, we COULD! Warm, but not hot, suddenly. And to think we ran the cabin heater last night and this morning. Monday before the Fourth.

This would be a good spot to come back to in the prevailing southerlies, or as long as we are on short stay and ready to cut and run when the whitecaps switch allegiance to the ol' north wind.



Time to light off and head for the barn. Thanks for coming along. Dan and Jamie the Seadog, June 2020.

## And Then She Was Gone

By Dan Rogers

I just recently saw "her" again, a ghost from my past. There's something about running around in one of those double cockpit, decked over aft runabouts. About 20', 18' would be okay, 25' is getting up there. Is it the tumblehome? Is it the blending of transom and deck? Dunno, but there is something completely elegant about the genre. And pretty impractical like how, if you want to handle lines down aft, you've got to crawl on that glossy deck and simply hope not to slide over the side. And they are really only good for the ephemeral, especially on "see and be seen" moments of high season and calm weather.

But there "she" was. Again. I reached for my camera too late for a good shot. Didn't see that boat coming in close until she was already headed back out. I was searching out a possible bad weather hideyhole in a rocky and boulder strewn little cove, idling in slowly and paying attention to the depth and stuff I could see on the bottom. By the time "she" made a quick swoop in close and roared away, the best images I could record were mental, not photographic.

I was only ten or so at the time I got to ride in one once for about 20 minutes. It was pitch dark and I was assigned to the rear seat with the baggage and my girl cousin. My favorite uncle bought her on a whim and showed up with this becoming passé

runabout (when the new and "indestructible, maintenance free, modern" fiberglass boats were The Thing). My family had been invited to join in a trip to my favorite uncle's lake cabin. That shack was on a promontory across the water from a little Canadian berg called "Peachland" or Ossoyeus or something like that on Lake Okanogan. There were no roads to the east side of the lake. We had to put a boat in the water and cross to his property. He told us about killing all the rattlers within a hundred yards of the place with a shovel. We shouldn't be troubled by snakes. Snakes? I was simply fascinated by the boat!

I could probably still describe most of the event in excruciating detail down to how we "moored" her in behind a small rocky island and how she bounced on the rocks and how that insufficient fender didn't protect the chine from getting gouged. My favorite uncle always had a brand new car or two, a different airplane and was building a different mansion just about every time I got to visit him. Boats and stuff were just toys to him.

We were supposed to go waterskiing the next day but that sweet little four banger, back under that beautifully crafted aft deck, was "overheating" and we even had a bit of a fire when one of the water skis stowed back there got burned. I asked about that later, much later. By then that particular boat was completely forgotten. But I do recall that he didn't open the seacock to the cooling water inlet and things got hot. We had to idle back across the lake come morning next, and that was that.

I never forgot that little girl and now there "she" was again, and then just as quickly she was gone.



### RAM ISLAND PEAPOD

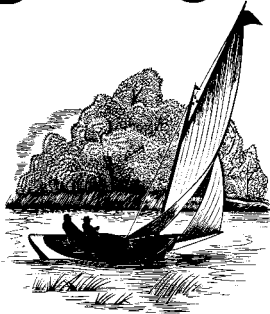


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## Delaware River Chapter of the Traditional Small Craft Association June/July 2020

Full Moon in June, called the Strawberry Moon, teased these quarantined sailors out on the Bay. Flood tide in early June is also a signal for prehistoric limulus (horseshoe crabs) to double up, party and mate crab style. Gelatinous eggs are laid at the high tide line and provide a necessary food source for northward migrating birds.

The launch was a familiar ramp on Towne Creek in St Michaels, Maryland. Since it is property of the town of St Michaels there is no fee. We expected many boats at the Saturday launch but there were none, even though it was opening day of Rock Fish Season on the Bay.

Three Marsh Cats captained by Joe Manning, Doug Oeller and I accompanied a Handy Cat with Paul Skalka and Navigator captained by Kevin Brennen. At the ramp



### Full Moon Float

#### Cats on the Loose (and One Navigator)

By Pete Peters

It was noted had one of the catboats had a new bilge pump installed? No! We quickly learned it was water flowing into the bilge through the unstoppered drain plugs. It is something we have all done or thought about. "If it's going to happen, it is going to happen out there" (from the movie *Captain Ron*). This experience is the reason my *Obadiah* does not have drain plugs (one more place to leak or rot) and I pray for no thunderstorms on the trip home.

We were off and it felt pretty good to sail close hauled to Hunting Creek for lunch and a gam on the exposed sandy beach. Then we tacked to the head of the Miles River, dodged the Patriot Tour Boat telling the loudspeaker story of "How St Michaels fooled the British."

The wind was favorable for a beat up to Woodland Creek. It was high tide and full moon so the entrance to the creek was 3' deep. In past trips *Obadiah* had to be walked through the shallow entrance. Once inside the creek it was peaceful with few houses, a bald eagle overhead, the fish surfacing at dusk. A

light breeze kept bugs ashore.

Social distancing was the rule for anchoring and swimming in the nettle free creek. Getting back into the boats was somewhat challenging for we old guys but "up and out swim ladders" were appreciated. Kevin had rigged a line from bow to stern cleat that seemed to work well.

My Glowmaster butane stove made a hissing sound when turned on so I deemed it unsafe and a kind catboat skipper heated clam chowder and morning coffee that he shared with well sanitized hands.

The rest of the trip was much of the same. Winds of 15, whitecaps and fluky changing winds in Leeds Creek. Calm, bug free anchorages and songs after dinner made for quite a peaceful restful and appreciated small craft experience.



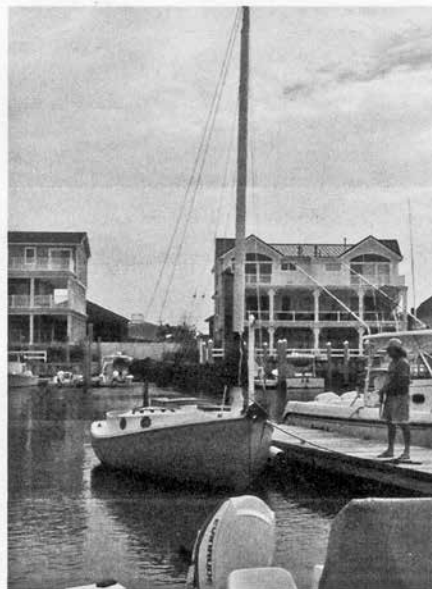
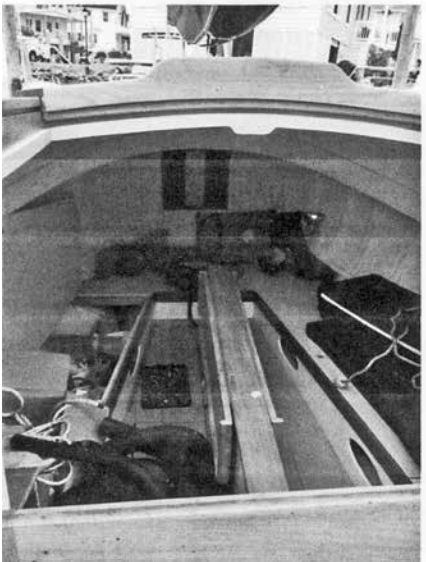
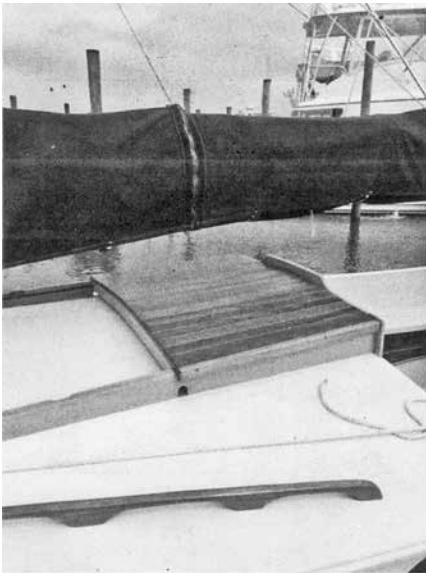
### Catboat Project Update

By Carol Jones

Bill and I traveled to Cape May to see Milt Edelman's catboat project. Milt, who was a speaker at our May meeting, is restoring a 20' catboat named *Lobelia* launched 54 years ago. She was built by John D. Little at his Mile Creek Boat Shop in Old Lyme, Connecticut. The designer was Fenwick Williams.

Milt has done an intensive restoration, including sistering the ribs. Now *Susan Ross*, she was launched in early June. She's a real beauty with a new two cylinder Yanmar Diesel. Her new rack and pinion steering is a challenge for Milt, it is not at all as responsive as the tiller systems to which he is accustomed but he's getting used to it!!





## Heaving To

Submitted By Duncan Wright  
*The Venturesome Voyages of Captain Voss*  
 (John Voss, 1926)

"I sailed from Victoria, British Columbia, in the 75' foot schooner *Jessy* on December 1, 1907. A few days later we met an exceedingly heavy gale off the Columbia River. At the beginning of the storm I went through a variety of storm sail drills and by doing so found that she lay to splendidly under three reefed foresail with the sheet well hauled in, double reefed fore staysail with the sheet nearly amidships and the wheel a little down. Under these sails the vessel reached ahead a little and lay to very comfortably. Gradually, as the wind and seas increased, I put the wheel down more and more and hauled the staysail sheet more to windward..." Her headway "was stopped and she made nearly a square drift. The wake then, instead of being under the stern as is the case with sailing," appeared along the vessel's weather side with a most wonderful effect in smoothing down breaking seas on their approach."

## *The Cruise of the Conrad The Way of a Ship*

(Alan Villiers, 1937 & 1953)

"Sailors on square riggers know two kinds of heaving to. In fine weather the ship lies quietly, practically still. In bad weather the ship yields and gives, she does not fight for headway. She lies in the trough of the sea with her shoulder to the breaking water, like an albatross asleep with its head beneath its wing..."

## *Two Years Before the Mast*

Richard Henry Dana (1845)

"One of the finest sights I have ever seen was an albatross asleep upon the water off Cape Horn when a heavy sea was running. There being no breeze, the surface of the water was unbroken but a long heavy sea was rolling and we saw the fellow, all white, directly ahead of us, asleep upon the waves with his head under his wing, now rising upon the top of a huge billow and then falling slowly until he was lost in the hollow between. He was undisturbed for some time until the noise of our bows gradually approaching, roused him, when lifting his head he stared at us for a moment and then spread his wide wings and took his flight."

## Lee Shores

Submitted by Duncan Wright

"When in Doubt, Stay Out"

*A Treatise on Practical Seamanship*

William Hutchinson (1777)

"A pilot had come aboard but we kept off, the wind blew fresh right upon the shore with drizzling hazy weather and we could not see a mile before us. The pilot pressed us very hard to run for the harbor. We told him of the great risk there was in running upon a lee shore in such bad weather, and if we fell in with any great difference from a fair way, he was to consider that the ship was not to be worked and managed among the shoals, like the small vessel we had taken him from."

He answered that the greatest danger was from our not running to get into safety when we might, and that his life was dear to him, and having a family depending upon it, as any of ours could be to us, and that if he could but see any part of the land, or even the breakers, he could steer in by them, to get into safety."

By the pilot's persuasion we bore away for our port, but with all the necessary precaution possible to guard against the apprehended dangers above mentioned, we ran before the wind under close reefed main and foretop sails, thinking we should be obliged to carry them by the wind, if occasion required to make the ship work, or to keep clear of the lee shore, the lower sails in the brails ready to set on either tack by the wind, the anchors and cables all clear, all hands at their stations looking sharp out, and the deep sea lead going."

In 15 fathom water, we saw land and broken water near ahead, which was shown to the pilot, asking him which way we should go now, he pointed away from the danger we were nearest to, but looking the way he pointed, nothing could be seen but broken raging waves, we asked him what was then to be done, being in 5 fathom water, I perceived he was overcome with fear, and had nothing to say, but left us to save ourselves as we could..."

We then brought the ship round by the wind, got the main and fore sheets aft with the tacks... by which under Providence, and the ship's fast sailing, we but just cleared the breakers on the lee-shore. After this, the pilot, as is common with all such unthinking men, went from rash confidence to such extreme fearfulness, that he thought we could not possibly get far enough from the danger we had so narrowly escaped. Then the weather cleared up with a sudden change with a gale of wind offshore, that put us under reefed courses; we could but just see the land from the masthead."

## Delaware River Chapter

Traditional Small Craft Association

[www.delrivertsca.net](http://www.delrivertsca.net)

The Delaware River Chapter of the Traditional Small Craft Association works to preserve and continue the living traditions, skills, lore and legends surrounding working and pleasure craft whose origins predate the maritime gasoline engine. It encourages the design, construction and use of these boats. Whether you have an interest in traditional boat building, messing about in small boats or helping preserve our maritime heritage come join us and share the camaraderie of kindred spirits."

## Gray Fleet

The US Navy is fretting over the relatively new Russian Canyon Weapon System or AUUV (Autonomous Unmanned Underwater Vehicle) that can travel for thousands of miles at depths of 1,000 meters at 100 knots and is tipped with a nuclear warhead. The Naval Institute's Proceedings noted three options: a) reduce our own nuclear arsenal to lessen tensions between countries, b) use diplomacy to develop newer treaties regarding this threat, c) develop our own version of this weapon.

As the Navy stewes over Russia, China is rapidly creating its own submarine capabilities. Critics worry that the US has taken a backseat to our two major threats and they decry the seven changes of Secretary of Navy over the last three years, to say nothing of the President's halting completion of the *USS Iowa* (SSN-797) and using the assigned funds to continue his wall on the Mexican border.

The age old political squabble over how big should the Navy be is once again unleashed upon us. President Trump claims he wants to increase the number of Naval vessels to 355. But what is a Navy ship? Do we count the Military Sealift Command ships that are primarily freighters, oilers and auxiliary ships? Do we count ships that are leased to the Navy? Do we only count offensive fighting ships? Whose numbers do we use, Congress, the White House, the Navy, Jane's Ships, the Budget Office?

Vice Admiral Lisa Franchetti stepped down as Commander of the Sixth Fleet, a position she set historical records as being the first woman in Fleet Command. She was relieved by Vice Admiral Gene Black, the former Commander of Carrier Strike Group 8. Franchetti received the Distinguished Serve Medal for her services. She will assume duties as Deputy Chief of Naval Operations for Warfighting Development at the Pentagon.

Kenneth J. Braithwaite was sworn in as the 77th Secretary of the Navy. The revolving door of SecNav or Acting SecNav has caused a more than mild stir among the Gold Braids. Braithwaite is a graduate of the Naval Academy, a pilot, highly decorated veteran, scholar and former Information Officer. He was serving as Ambassador to Norway when he was selected for SecNav.

One major headache facing the new SecNav is the budget vs Congress. The Defense Department developed a 30 year shipbuilding program and appropriate funding was pretty much etched in stone. Suddenly last year the President cut shipbuilding by 17% and diverted the funds for his Mexican wall, as has been discussed in previous issues. Now the Democratic House and Republican Senate have very different proposals to counter the elimination of funds. The difference between the Right and Left side of the Capitol is somewhat complicated. The House Armed Services Committee wants to increase funds to continue to build the planned two submarines a year. The Senate Armed Services Committee bill wants to use funds existing as "down payment" for future ships as I understand it.

The Navy and Coast Guard have combined to secure the Caribbean and Southern East Coast areas from drug runners. Recently they worked together to seize over 4,000lbs of cocaine. The camouflaged quasi submarine used by the transporters is made primarily from fiberglass and sits at virtually



## Over the Horizon

By Stephen D.  
(Doc) Regan

sea level to avoid radar, visual recognition and other forms of identification. A typical "sub" can carry about 1.5 tons of drugs. The "Go Fast" boats carry significantly less cargo because of the necessity for large quantities of fuel to make the typical 2,000 mile trip to the US.

### Environment

Sundry organizations are mounting pressure on Congress to support some semblance of a ban on plastics that continue to create major environmental damage to our oceans. Certainly the data is overwhelming and undeniable, the solution is equally overwhelming. A plethora of whales have died with bellies full of plastics. The indestructible stuff has been found as deep as the bottom of the Mariannas Trench. Seabirds have been seen feeding their young pieces of plastic that they misidentified as food. In my humble opinion (to coin a phrase), a long term very drastic issue is the small bits of plastic that have been intermingled with zooplankton to the point that plankton eaters cannot consume their food without ingesting plastic. Plankton is at the very bottom of the food chain. It will eventually creep up to humanity, if humanity survives that long.

One of the incredibly pristine trout streams in the midwest, Bloody Run, flows through the steep bluffs of the Driftless Zone, continually fed by pure springs until it meets the Mississippi at Marquette, Iowa. The late Tim Mason was obsessed with the environment of this special creek and he fought any and every person who tried to change land bordering on the stream. He successfully fought off investors who wanted to build an 18 hole golf course beside it. He successfully kept developers from housing centers on it.

The Iowa DNR discovered 898 dead trout along Bloody Run. Because of the swift current they were unable to identify the source, however, their laboratory analysis clearly indicated toxicity from farm runoffs. Iowa farmers are among those who believe that if a little insecticide, herbicide and chemical fertilizer are good, then lots and lots of it can only be better. Iowa is the primary contributor to the Dead Zone in Louisiana.

Trout fishing is something of a passion for many. Fly fishing is considered a very exquisite form of fishing that mandates hand eye coordination, deft wrists, patience and a willingness to hunt for good spots. Proper equipment is essential. A good fly rod, an abundance of flies and a ton of knowledge about climate, trout, water, etc is equally essential.

As a child, I occasionally went with my dad trout fishing. I played around in cow pies while he fished. These trout were native bred, born and lived in certain creek holes. There was no stocking of fish in those days. My dad sought one particular rainbow trout at Waterloo Creek for a couple of years, as did every other fisherman in the county. Interestingly,

dad actually caught that granddaddy, due to lack of funds he could never have it mounted but a photo of the 30 inchers hangs on my son's wall in St Paul.

By the 1960s, native trout had virtually disappeared. Too many streams became open for public use, banks had grown tall and unsteady, the water turned cloudy and the stream bottoms became muddy instead of covered with cobble. One study noted that by the 1970s trout fishing was attracting people from as far away as 250 miles vs the local folk of earlier times. Farm runoff, of course, is a major factor in the disappearance of trout.

John Lyons, University of Wisconsin, is working on a massive project to reintroduce trout to the Midwest streams. This effort entails clearing up streams, ensuring that farmers leave wide splotches of cover along creeks and keen record keeping of snowfall, weather and rain. Dr Mike Osterholm, the major epidemiologist on corona virus, discoverer of "Toxic Shock Syndrome" and one of the first to identify HIV in the US has built an acreage with large pond to raise brown trout. (I student taught him. He is a classmate and friend of my brother.) People like Mike and John are earnestly working to bring back rainbow, brown and brook trout in the Driftless Region.

### Northeast Iowa Waterways

Two women were tubing on the Turkey River near Clermont, Iowa, and went over a low dam and drowned. They ignored signs that identified the dam well upstream. Unfortunately a safety cable hanging over the water had been taken out by a snag.

The chronic drownings in Iowa's relatively shallow rivers is lamentable. Many "tubers" are from small towns that have no swimming pools or they are rural residents who never learned to swim. When they get caught up in a dead tree or slip off the tube, they tend to panic.

Once when I was canoeing with my wife (who tends to panic easily) we came to a narrow spot on the Turkey River where a floating tree had become stuck. The current was especially fast and we smacked it broadside despite my best ability to turn. It was the only time in my life I flipped a canoe and I have been in canoes since childhood. My wife lost all semblance of sanity and damn near drowned. The tree had forced the river to cut a swath underneath it. You can walk most of the river its full length without getting your waist wet but this location had a very, very deep hole. Tubers, kayakers and canoeists would have gone swimming there. Mrs Doc won't go on a river since that event.

A man tried to kayak the entirety of the Mississippi from the source to the Gulf. He was well prepared, well equipped and well trained except he forgot one thing, a life jacket. As you can imagine, he turned turtle on Lake Winnibigoshish and had to be rescued. He was using a sailing kayak and had a bit of rigging mishap. The Minnesota DNR gave him a citation. Brent Birt, the ambitious sailor, continued on his way, a little lighter in the pocketbook.

A Quasqueton, Iowa, man drowned in Guttenberg when he entered restricted waters near Lock and Dam #10 and was swamped. He, duh, was not wearing a life vest. Note that Guttenberg, Marquette, Bloody Run and the Turkey River are all within 15 miles of each other. I lived along the Turkey River for 23 years and I own a small lot in Marquette.

Nothing surprises me in that area.

Marquette sits next to McGregor like Minneapolis and St Paul. McGregor had a sewer problem and dumped 10,000 gallons of raw sewage into the Mississippi. And still they water ski, swim, fish and boat from the ramp at McGregor. Oh, by the way, poop carries the Covid 19 virus.

Twenty miles north in Lansing, Iowa, two jet skiers collided head on. Just how two jet skiers could hit head on in the middle of the main channel of the Mississippi River boggles the mind. The good news is that they were both wearing life jackets. The bad news is that they had to be transported to the Gunderson Medical Center in La Crosse, Wisconsin. Yup, that's my home area.

A woman was soloing kayaking on the Upper Iowa River but was reported missing. The Decorah Police Department recently purchased a drone and they flew it upriver until they discovered her. She had destroyed the kayak and was stranded in the middle of nowhere. FYI, the Upper Iowa River is a wonderfully beautiful river weaving through the bluffs and forests a long way from anywhere. You can spend a whole day and see nothing human around you.

Ah yes, I am very proud to be from Northeast Iowa. You can identify the women as the ones without beards. Tattoo artists make small fortunes. Gang wars erupt between the Greens and the Reds (John Deere lovers versus International Harvester fans) and these feuds can last several generations. Every Iowan has Pioneer Seed Corn hats, gloves, jackets, knives and just about everything needed to set up a household. Now you understand why, at one time, more Iowans, per capita, enlisted in the Navy than any other state.

### Merchant Fleet

The civilian mariners crewing the cargo ships in the Military Sealift Command have filed a grievance against the Defense Department for its "Stay Aboard" policy restricting the sailors from going ashore due to the Covid 19 pandemic. Many of these civilians sit in US harbors but are unable to see their families or have suffered other problems. Several crewmembers have watched their cars towed away because of illegal overtime parking but they cannot go ashore to move them.

### White Fleet

The cruise news is, well, there isn't any cruise news. But if you have a ton of money and want to go to sea the super yacht business still will feed you till you burst, roll until you toss your cookies and provide entertainment of sorts. Those who watch TVs "Below Decks" know full well about that kind of cruising. Ah, a typical tip for three to four days will be about \$25,000.

Captain Sandy Yawn is the current skipper of a super yacht that is featured on the show. Being blonde, pretty and capable did not hurt her chances of replacing Captain Mark Howard. The 56-meter *Wellesley* is the current boat headlining the production. Her main job, besides skippering the vessel, is herding her greenhorn crew that includes a bona fide first class chef, several attendants, entertainment people and deck hands. On the TV side, the production crew take up 60 hotel rooms at whatever Mediterranean port where they land.

For those with thick wallets and a keen desire for first class living, the *Anypa*, a 92',

152 ton boat with a crew of a mere five can be scheduled for a paltry \$45,000 per week. The *Gatsby*, a 100', 40 ton beauty is a little more expensive at \$80,000 per week but it can handle 12 passengers. However, for you folks who want something a "bit more" and can take a week away from the trials and tribulations of counting all your money, the *Naia* can be your host for a week for pocket change of a measly \$595,000. *Naia* is 241' in length and has a mighty beam of 40' and weighs in at a displacement of 2,000 tons. And yes, you can take your helicopter along.

My personal favorite that is high on my own list of family vacation sites is the incredible *La Datcha*, with a 250' length of luxury at the highest levels. Looking like an artist's dream of art deco shipbuilding, this wonder of the seas has six staterooms for 12 guests and provides for your every whim (well, almost every) with a crew of 25. With its highly rounded bow she looks like a luxury passenger train of a certain era, especially the *Zephyr* that ran between Seattle and Chicago. *La Datcha's* bow is shaped so that she can take you on the highly delightful cruise to Antarctica. I plan on chartering it for a Christmas family cruise where I can get away from Iowa's winter and go to the South Pole (it is summer there). The cost is \$750,000 per week. Yes, three-quarters of a million bucks. And don't forget to leave an appropriate tip!

Birka Cruise Lines went belly up in late June thanks to insolvency. While not particularly well known in the US, the Birka ships sailed primarily in the Baltic typically commencing voyages in Stockholm. The company originally was a ferry service between Sweden and Finland's Aland Islands that sit in the Gulf of Finland midway between Sweden and Finland. Although they are part of Finland, the residents speak Swedish and lean heavily toward the western nation rather than their home county.

Pullmantur Lines, a Spanish company, is sending all of its ships to the knackers. Partially owned by Royal Caribbean, the company lost \$1.3 billion in the first quarter of 2020. That is not pocket change in anyone's book.

Chit chat floating around the scuttlebutt claims that 23 of the world's most favorite ships are heading to the junkyard to make razor blades or whatever old ships become. Such well known ships as *Symphony of the Seas*, *Empress of the Seas*, *Grandeur of the Seas*, *Majesty of the Seas* and *Sovereign of the Seas* are being dumped by Royal Caribbean. Carnival is targeting *Carnival Fantasy* and *Carnival Inspiration*. Holland America has only one on the slaughterhouse list, *Maasdam*. Costa, who already is in trouble, has painted big red Xs on *Costa Victoria* and *Costa Romantica*.

In previous "Over The Horizon" columns, the postponement of shipbuilding, canceled orders and delayed repairs hammering the cruise industry has been thoroughly discussed. Whether the cruise line companies can rebound is questionable.

### Inland Waterways

An LST (Landing Ship Tank) is modeled after a shoebox with a bow. It is hollow, 327' long with a beam of 50' powered by a pair of GM 12-567 diesels. It was capable of a top speed of 12 knots (read that, SLOW), had a flat bottom, could run right up on shore to discharge men and tanks and back off with ease. Loaded, the bow drew about

3' of water but the stern was a little deeper. Its beauty was that the props and the rudders were above the ship's bottom and thus protected on beaching. It was essential to major WWII operational amphibious assaults such as D-Day.

The LST was kind of an ugly duckling. The enlisted men referred to them as "Large Slow Targets." They were rocking and rolling transoceanic ships but never got around to having names like all the other Navy ships. They simply had numbers. They were especially vulnerable to shore batteries who aimed at them due to their cargo of large equipment or large number of men. These beasts needed about eight officers and another 100 men to crew. In true Navy style, crews of these LSTs were looked down on, especially compared to the Airedales on carriers or men of a battleship.

Unfortunately, like a Bic pen, they were disposable and they were mostly trashed after WWII and Korea. Nevertheless, a bunch of LST sailors felt that a ship like this deserved a museum and so they globally searched for one still afloat, however, those left in Asia were trashed. The Greeks, who believe that ships have souls, do not cut up the derelicts but they simply put them aside and let Mother Nature do her thing. It was in Greece that six floating LSTs were discovered.

LST-325 was repaired to the point of making the trip through the Med and across the Atlantic. After a lot of paint, new parts and engineering miracles LST-325 became alive. It was established as a floating museum that runs up and down rivers like the Mississippi, stopping wherever and allowing tours for \$25 per head and selling the ubiquitous shirts, souvenirs and stuff. An LST does not make for a great museum because it is a floating box without a lot of "Navy Stuff" about it like a battleship or a submarine. Still, LST-325 is worth a tour.

This particular ship has been on the hunt for a permanent home for the months when not running up and down rivers. When Evansville, Indiana, lost a casino, the slip opened an opportunity for both ship and shore to come together. With \$3.3 million from the city council, the city tourism office and others, an appropriate berth was built. LST-325 rests there as a tourist attraction and will continue a fall voyage around the Inland Waterways (after the Covid virus is done).



LST-325 (left) and USS LST-388 unloading while stranded at low tide during the invasion of Normandy in June 1944. Note: propellers, rudders and other underwater details of these LSTs, 40mm single guns and "Danforth" style kedge anchor at the stern.



The shipyards and boat builders of Essex built and maintained an eclectic mix of vessels, dugout canoes, skiffs, dories, sloops, schooners, pleasure cruisers, steamboats, the list goes on and on. We have just a handful of these types to share with you this month as well as a piece of history wrested from the shifting sands of Essex Bay and a historic shoreline tour around the end of Conomo Point.

Given the long history of human activity on the Essex River, it's no surprise that every once in a while an artifact from the past will resurface. Dana Story's note on the back of these photos reads, "Ancient floor timber of colonial boat dug from the sand of Crane's Beach by Ray Mulcahy in spring of 1955."



## Frame Up Essex Shipbuilding Images from the Past

By Christopher Stepler  
Operations Administrator  
Essex Historical Society and Shipbuilding  
Museum (978) 768-7541

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A working boat and a yacht are lined up in these two photos from April and May of 1950. The lobster boat with a striking pulpit (likely for tuna) is the *Doreen S.* and the newly arrived and racy looking 17' Chris Craft is *My-Cyn* on her trailer.



The handsome 40' motor cruiser *Four Bits*, launched on August 28, 1952, was another of Dana Story's builds. He left notes on the back of many of the photos in his collection, including this one, which reads, "We built it on the railway carriage and pushed the whole thing down the bank." The launch must have been quite a thing to see!



These identical 75' fishing schooners were out to harvest a different catch than the usual fare of cod, halibut or mackerel. Built with flush decks and centerboards, *Benjamin M. Wallace* and *John A. Ericsson* (launched 1894) were designed and equipped to dredge oysters. The centerboards on these schooners came down through the garboard (the plank next to the keel) on the port side. Because of this, the mainmast had to be offset to starboard with the foremast offset to port to balance the rig. They sailed adequately into the wind but were remarkably fast when reaching or running. The majority of the Essex built oyster schooners fished either from Wellfleet, Massachusetts, or in Long Island Sound.



When the first week of summer officially got underway, there was a steady stream of boat traffic headed downriver to clam, fish and swim in the waterways and on the flats and barrier beaches of the Great Marsh. Located right in the middle of it all are Conomo Point and Cross Island. This undated photo taken from the end of Conomo Point looks upriver and into the sunset with Cross Island visible on the right.





Moving further east and turning toward the north from our last photo, at right we get a good view of the SE end of Cross Island and the Narrows. The Narrows is the deepest and fastest flowing section of the Essex River, making it a tricky spot to row through if traveling against the tide. Here the tide is low but appears to be rising, two lapstrake skiffs sit ready on the near shore with another tied up across the river on Cross Island.

Below our final view from Conomo Point (for now) was taken from the east side of the point and again looks over towards Cross Island. The bare summit of the island speaks to centuries of harvesting wood for homes, ships, and fuel, much of what is now wooded land in Essex was similarly bare at the turn of the 20th century.





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You guys are hard to please, wanted to see the two Big Ben 19s finished. Howard made his an open fishing boat and Wally a cabin boat with a cool Dutch door on the front. Here's *Rochester* under sail somewhere south of me.



Here's *Helen Marie*, my 24' fantail launch. A while back Howard wanted to see if he could take the plans for Roger Allen's 16' melonseed (you'll see lots of them later) and blow it up 25% in all dimensions. We have a friend who's good at that kind of stuff (Richard, you'll see one of his boats later) who was happy to do it. He also warned us that doing this doesn't always come out like you thought.

Well, Howard did build the boat (coming up later) and since the building molds were there I used them to make this one. I added 8" to the sides, stuck on a 4' fantail to hide the motor, put in water ballast for stability and here she is. She had the usual stuff any civilized boat would have, air conditioning, ice maker, microwave, running water, you know, the usual.

She was a great boat but after four or five years I gave her away and started something else. I always drive a hard bargain when I unload my old boats. I got rid of boat, motor and trailer for the price of the outboard motor. The guy has put a million hours on her.



# From the Tiki Hut

By Dave Lucas

## Where Have All Our Small Boats Gone?

Boats Built in the Boatworks and Happy Hour Club

### Part 2

Stan has produced a ton of boats here, some of them really unusual. The wheelbarrow boat is one but this junk is a real grabber. He just makes this up in his head. It has both inside and outside steering and goes pretty good.



Beats me, another quickie he made.



This is a "Nancy's China" designed by a real designer, I guess, 'cause there are a lot of them out there. They named it that because you can build it for the price of one set of Nancy Reagan's china. Stan being Stan modified the hell out of it and put his melonseed sail up.



This one is another masterpiece produced by Howard, with a little help from me. I got a call from a man who had bought this really old Star from somewhere up north and was going to rebuild it. When Joe really looked into it the job was way beyond anything he could do so he took it to the maritime museum in Cortez to see if they would have a go at it. Well, the poor old boat sat out in the weather for years because no one in their right mind would even think about restoring this mess until I came along.



I took Helen to look at it and she laughed just like everyone else, we left. I did some research on this boat and discovered that was actually a rare one. It was built in 1929. I won't go into details but I was sort of impressed. I took Howard out to see it and we both decided that there's no way we wanted to do it. On the way home we got to thinking, the hull planking was in sort of good shape (and that's all) so we ended up hauling it home. We told Joe that we'd fix it up if he paid for all the supplies. He did and we did and ended up with the second oldest sailing Star in the world.



### Part 3

I knew this one was coming and try not to get overwhelmed but today it's Melon Seeds out the wazoo.



I'll start with this one, *Laylah*, it's the first one built in the series we've called Cortez melonseeds. Roger Allen actually drew up the lines and made the first set of molds to build these boats on. Turns out that with his perfect hull shape and the big sail from the Beetle Cat design, the boats are fantastic performers. They won't plane but they will move along in almost no wind and are a ball to sail. As Stan is fond of saying, all they have is one line and one rudder to handle. No stays or shrouds to fool with and you can really hot rod the hell out of them without fear of swamping.



Because they float on their side when you turn one over, which is actually pretty hard to do, whenever I'm at a gathering of small boats and it's warm I make a point of capsizing near the beach to show how this looks. To get it back up I just go around to the bottom, grab the side of the deck and step on the centerboard and she pops right back up. All the spars are made of wood so it won't roll all the way over. If there is a dog in the boat when doing this and you can't get it to come back up, look at the sail and you'll see the dog laying there happy as can be.



Some of the others will make you drool at how pretty they are. Jose made sure this one was perfect.



Sam did this orange one, he had a sense of humor. The one variable with the boats is the deck and cockpit layout. Camber is the curve across the deck, some have a lot and some have a little. The smaller camber the racier the boat looks. The smallest is on mine at 1 1/2" and the biggest is 3", I think. Some cockpits are straight sided ovals and some are ovals that follow the shape of the side of the deck. All of the boats from here have small cockpits so they'll float on their sides but you have to sit on the deck like a Sunfish. Boats built for up north often have much bigger cockpits so you can sit down inside and hopefully not get wet. They say that the water north of Florida gets cold sometime. I wouldn't know.



#3 was Stan's boat, here with a hot babe on the deck.



*Miss Kate* is one of Howard's melons, he made three or four, I think. Don't you just hate it when you're working around guys who can do this kind of work without even thinking about it and you're struggling to knock out all of the larger dings and gouges and waves.





Yeah, but if I can make one of these since all of the boats are strip planked out of small pieces of wood and then glassed, why couldn't I make one out of Styrofoam and glass it also? The building mold was just sitting there waiting for the next boat so I went to Lowes and got some sheets of 2" foam to do the planking with. I ran the stuff through the table saw and made 2"x2" foam planks 8' long. There is nothing holding them together except bamboo skewers, no glue of any kind. I just stuck the skewers through and when they rode up off of the form I wrapped a piece of dental floss around the stick and tied it to the form.

This was so much fun and easy to do that it attracted guys from everywhere to give it a try. That's Jose and Ernie sticking some together. Roger Allen came to see it after it was sanded. It took a total of, are you ready for this, three hours to put the whole thing together. It didn't matter if there were humps and bumps, I just sanded them out, after all, I had 2" to work with. The reason there cannot be any glue is because if it got too close to the surface it wouldn't sand like the foam and would be a screw up. I had to be really careful sanding it, I used the lightest sander and very light pressure or else I'd go right through the thing.



Now for the down side. Since it's foam with absolutely no structural strength it has

to be glassed really thick. The super light weight and low cost making the foam hull was lost in the glassing. It still weighed less than the wooden ones but cost a lot more due to the cost of the extra glass and epoxy. But it was really strong when all was said and done.

Here it is all finished. Like most of the boats I start, I don't finish them and end up giving them away. I gave this hull to Jim and he finished it using conventional methods. He finished it and, like me, used it once and sold it to a friend in Jacksonville. He said that this was the best and most fun boat he'd ever owned because it was so simple and easy to use.



The little girl in the water is my granddaughter, Laylah, not Brenda the redhead. While the boat was here I wanted to see how well it floated. What you're seeing is the hull floating with its plug pulled! It took on about 4" of water and stopped. We put the plug back in and got a bucket and filled it all the way up to the top and pulled the plug back out and after about ten minutes here is how it looks, all the water drained back out. Cool.



Not to be outdone, Jose decided to make one using no wood at all, all foam. And he almost did. It was a lot harder to do because he had to glass all of the pieces, and I mean all. The deck beams, the centerboard and centerboard trunk. The rub rails were PVC pipes cut in half and filled with foam. Even the spars were foam, yes, the mast, boom and gaff were foam. the only thing he couldn't get to work out was the rudder. There is a lot of stress on a small area of the rudder head so, instead of going nuts with foam and glass, he just made one from wood and I hung the foam one up in a tree as our wind sock.



Here he is, zipping right along.



The one with the shiny finish and melon vine is called #9. It stayed upside down in the shop so long the guys threatened to burn it if I didn't do something with it. I love making these hulls and this one was particularly good and I just kept on sanding and varnishing it. Luckily a guy in Dallas found out about it and for some reason Roger Allen delivered it to him, I never did know the story on that one. This red one is one Howard made for his daughter up in Ohio. She came down here and I took her out sailing in it.



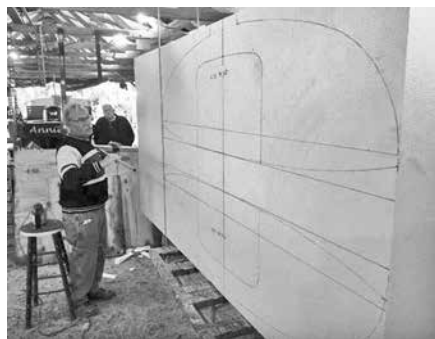




We had launched some of the boats off of the beach on this blustery day and I noticed a guy standing there watching us. When I came in I got to talking to him and he was from Israel and loved the boats. Mine was already on its trailer so I said to come on and we jumped into Sam's boat. I even had a spare jacket. It was blowing like hell but you can see that they are easy to control and the gaff rig keeps the sail relatively close to the water as opposed to tall modern rigs. It won't point to weather with tall rigs but it's more fun. Notice that the unstayed mast is not breaking.



I'll leave you with another foam boat, and I mean a real foam boat. Our friend Richard from up in Apollo Beach makes real airplanes and gliders from foam so leave it to him to want a foam melonseed. He is also a computer and design genius, teaches it at USF. He got these giant pieces of foam and laid out the shapes on them and cut the shapes with a hot wire. This took a week or so to do and somehow the word spread and again guys seemed to come out of the woodwork to see it done and to get a chance to try it out. It's a solid boat, no space under the deck at all, it's all carved out of foam. I didn't see how he did the centerboard so don't ask. He took it home to finish.



And here it is, hard to believe, isn't it? Richard lives on a canal that winds its way out to Tampa Bay so naturally he built an electric motor into the skeg. I know, just when you think you have your shit together along comes this guy with something like this.



There are more melonseeds but I think this is enough, I've made five hulls but only finished and kept one, *Laylah*. There are some being made all over, even one in Bon Aire, he says there ain't much there unless you are a diver so he wants a fun little sailboat. I think 18 of them have been made so far, thanks, Roger.

#### Part 4

Today I'm going to step it up a little from the dinky little boats we do here and go on with a real man's boat, a boat that you can have (and many do) to use only once in a rare while and keep stored in a high and dry storage.

All of our unusual boats have names so we know what we're talking about, this one is the Mega Yacht.



Ain't she a beauty and here's her story. This is a 24' Sea Ray inboard/outboard on a tandem axle trailer. Yeah, that one wheel is a little funky. I got a call one day from a guy I know saying that he had a friend with a boat that he wanted to give away. Yeah right, I get that all the time and there's no way any of us want a "free" boat. He said this one was different, it had a brand new 5 liter V8 and a brand new outdrive. Still no way, we don't do big motorboats but it wasn't very far away so Howard, Steve and I went over to have a look.

It didn't look this good when we got there. It was out in a pasture with the trailer completely sunk into the ground and looking worse than this. After a good laugh we were leaving when the old farmer came and told us the story. Ten years previous to this the boat was pristine looking and he'd had a new motor and outdrive put in so he and his wife could use it in his retirement. Before they could even launch it his wife got sick and died. He just parked it in his pasture and left it there uncovered.

Now he had the ranch up for sale and needed to get rid of the boat. He'd pull it out of the ground with his tractor and have his son clean it up some. He showed us the papers and receipts for the motor and drive and other things he'd had done. We came back to the shop and talked about it. Howard has always wanted to build a fast Chris Craft looking boat so I said he could just cut out the center 6' and have the running gear on the strong motor mounts and center supports with the motor, outdrive and fuel tank and could add on a old timey looking body. He sort of thought about so we got the boat.

Steve followed us home and was horrified when the tires started falling apart but we made it with two still rolling.

We started ripping the cabin apart down to the bare hull when Howard changed his mind and decided to keep the hull and make a new cabin arrangement and I couldn't talk him out of it.





Here's me and Helen and Lena, Steve's wife.



Before he could get on with the rebuild he needed to make sure all the running gear was good, which it wasn't. After all, sitting out in the weather for ten years is not real good for stuff. Things grow and make homes in any opening. The motor needed lots of work, new starter, wiring, carburetor and belts and hoses. The outdrive needed all new rubber hoses and fittings and the big built-in gas tank had to come out for cleaning. You know, easy stuff, as well as all the other wiring and controls. This was Howard's project, I was doing my own thing.



Cabin and roof went on, this was ten years ago when he was a younger man (72). And this being Howard, it's going really fast, like a couple of months.



The only problem for me was that all of this woodwork had to be glassed and Howard is allergic to epoxy so I got sucked into glassing everything, even though I still wanted to cut the thing apart. There was a lot of glassing. Funny how suddenly all the other guys forgot how to do that. As you can see, he likes to figure it out as he goes along.



Yep, look closely, all of this is glassed.



And then one day it was done and here it is, even has bottom paint and everything. We fired it up on the hose and the motor sounded like a Nascar racer firing up. The huge stainless steel prop whirled perfectly and all the instruments worked. In order to get it out of the shed we took the wheels off the trailer and buried it so it was level with the ground and pulled it up with cables and a truck. We stood there looking at it and the realization hit us that what the hell were we going to do with it. It would fit under the 10' bridge but could only go out the river at high tide and we'd never use it anyway, it was useless. We tried to sell it, even put it up on consignment with our car mechanic but nothing.



We ended up trading it for this old beat up tractor, never even took it out for a ride. This guy sold it and we never heard anything else about it. You see Howard, we should have cut it up for a speedboat. Right, this is typical of how things go around here. Just wait until you hear the one about the giant *Queen Anne*, later.



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This is a 16' speedboat with a 50hp Suzuki outboard and a custom trailer for easy launching. Howard just finished it and needs another project to start on. \$10,000 will get you this. It would be really great if you live on a big lake somewhere.



The trailer is a heavy duty galvanized trailer and has the smaller 3,000lb tires you see on pontoon trailers to make it lower and fenders to match. These things are really wide so it's easy to launch anywhere, even on sand.

# From the Tiki Hut

By Dave Lucas

## Giveaway Priced Boats!!!

From Dave Lucas  
Lucas Boatworks and Happy Hour Club  
Skipjack@tampabay.rr.com  
Glen-L "Malahini"



This was its maiden launch in June. The motor is a couple years old but has only about 20 hours on it, just barely broken in. Hull is glassed plywood with mahogany deck and trim. He didn't make the wooden seats but got these fancy leatherish ones. In the boat here is his son Steve, a really big guy. With this motor the boat is scary fast.

So how much of a deal is this? The trailer set up like this cost \$1,700, the motor cost us about \$6,500 (we get dealer prices), the boat has built in gas tank, instruments, seats, etc. So at the \$10,000 selling price you'd be getting the boat for \$1,800. Hell, I think the seats and gas tank cost half that much.



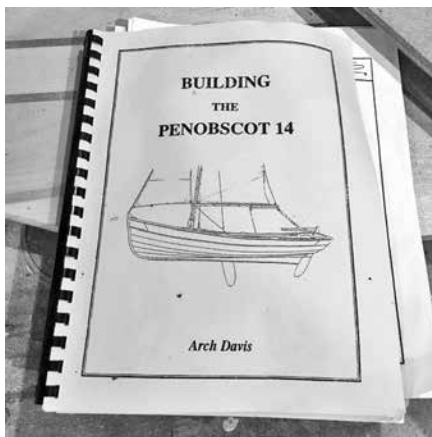
### Arch Davis Penobscot 13

If you've ever wanted one of these this is your chance to get one at a giveaway price. Our guy Brad decided that this is not the one he really wants and asked me to dispose of it for him. You can have the boat and everything that comes with it including sails, rudder, all rigging for \$800. All brand new, never been used. He just bought the trailer for \$600 so that's what he wants for it.

The hull was built from an Arch Davis kit by a guy working for his Eagle Scout badge but he didn't finish it because he went into the Naval Academy. The interior needs to be done. The hull is perfect. It had a dagger board so I showed him how to seal up the slot so he could put in a centerboard.

Here's the rudder kit. It was built with the sloop rig design so the sails are a main and a jib, brand new, of course. They cost \$700 from Davis. The bag is a boat cover. The cost to duplicate this whole rig is probably \$3,000. The trailer's never been in the water.

As you know, we're not in the business of making money with the boats we make here.



# JGTSCA



## John Gardner Traditional Small Craft Association

Welcome to John Gardner  
Traditional Small Craft Association

Visit us at the Community Boat House: Building #36 UCONN Avery Point  
1084 Shennecossett Rd, Groton, CT 06340

### Good Little Skiff & Dory Maintenance

from 5:00 pm Fridays, at UCONN Avery Point Boat house Building 36

**Next Meeting: Sunday, September 8th at 12:30 pm**

Potluck with Meeting to follow at UCONN Avery Point Boathouse Bldg. 36

Local: [www.JGTSCA.org](http://www.JGTSCA.org) [www.facebook.com/JGTSCA](https://www.facebook.com/JGTSCA)

National: [www.TSCA.net](http://www.TSCA.net)

John Gardner TSCA News Notes

From Bill Rutherford

This is the latest in our series of News Notes which we have been issuing during this time of restrictions due to Covid-19 to share our current activities whether on land, in the shop or preparing to go to sea. We have been weathering this storm since the Ides of March and now it's long past the Summer Solstice.

One casualty of our battle with the virus has been our John Gardner Small Craft Workshop, planned to celebrate the 50th Anniversary of the first Small Craft Conference Rowing Workshop held by John Gardner himself in the now far off year of 1970. Our Board decided on June 1 that holding the Workshop would be difficult with the travel limitations, the required 14 day quarantines for visitors from out of state as well as the hesitancy of many of our more senior and at risk members to expose themselves to other than close family groups.

We so advised Mystic Seaport Museum who concurred and cancelled the event. It was a tough decision since we had advertisements and articles in place to advise our members and the public of our special offerings planned for the weekend. So we'll be making plans for a year for how we may make the celebration all that more special in 2021.

## A Place for Lunch and a Sweater

Ben Fuller is pressing on with his rehab of his Culler Good Little Skiff. He reports, "Interior paint on the skiff has started. I drilled a couple of dory holes in the sheer-strake getting rid of the painter eye in the stem. I am thinking about adding a lunch platform underneath the stern sheets, something common in the old duckers. Keeps lunch and sweater out of the bilge water. Chesapeake colors are pretty plain, white with a green rub rail. The centerboard trunk is going to get painted green as well as some of the old iron fastenings are weeping a bit."



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## A New Sail Rig for the Ultralight Whitehall

This from Brian Cooper, "Here are pictures of my latest sail design, a balanced lug rig, and new rudder. I made the sail from a tarp and it worked well enough that I am going to make a cloth sail now. I need to make a tiller for the rudder. I also am working on some wooden block and tackle."



## A Beautiful Melonseed is Available

Bill Armitage has decided to part with the Melonseed skiff he so meticulously restored. He writes, "Melonseed Skiff by Brush Creek Yacht's built in 2006 to the specifications of the Smithsonian/Chapelle offsets. The boat is in great condition, 13'6" in length with a beam of 4'3" and is constructed of Atlantic white cedar planking over white oak steam bent frames, cypress keel and deck beams. The hull is encapsulated with epoxy and fiberglass cloth both inside and out and the interior is finished with a natural varnish. The hull is painted using Awlgrip paint system. Decks are cedar with fiberglass coating and varnish topcoat. Floorboards are cypress with an oiled finish. Coamings, rubrails and transom are mahogany. The white Dacron sail is still crisp and in great condition, the boat is gaff rigged with wooden mast hoops. The 2006 custom fit trailer is also in great condition with very low miles. It is for sale at \$4,000."



## A Salty Photo

Here's a salty photo by Sharon Brown, shot from the *Amistad's* inflatable.



## The Latest from Mystic Seaport

This fall the Collins Gallery in the Thompson Exhibition Building will host a new exhibition, "A Way with Wood: Celebrating Craft." At the core of the exhibition will be boat restoration and boat building demonstrations staffed by shipwrights (like Walter Ansel) from the Henry B. duPont Preservation Shipyard.

They will carry out different projects over the course of the exhibition, first will be a restoration of *Afterglow*, tender to the Museum's schooner *Brilliant*, followed by completion of restoration of Woods Hole Spritsail Boat *Sandy Ford*, followed by con-



struction of a new dory for the *L.A. Dunton*. The focus will be on using hand tools. Few power tools will be used." See [www.mysticseaport.org/news](http://www.mysticseaport.org/news).

Nearby, the Boathouse is now renting use of its small boats Tuesday through Sunday. If interested in assisting visitors as a volunteer, contact Shannon McKenzie at [shannon.mckenzie@mysticseaport.org](mailto:shannon.mckenzie@mysticseaport.org).



### What Ben Fuller's Sternsheets Look Like

Ben has sent us a photo of his "Place for Lunch and a Sweater" since his earlier remarks showing the result to be really clever. If you look closely Ben added a little shelf under the sternsheets (aft seat) that is above the bilge water and provides a resting place for the center portion of the sternsheets that, when removed, support the lunch/sweater bag. The bag sticks up through the sternsheets, held from sliding sideways by its sides. Note also the long sculling oar at the ready.



### A Lovely Study in Gray

We will leave you with this lovely study in gray that Sharon Brown titles, "Keeping an Eye in the River."



## THE EAST END CLASSIC BOAT SOCIETY



## How We Keep Sailing Into The Covid 19 Headwind!

Reprinted from The East End Classic Boat Society Newsletter

Our volunteers are getting into a rhythm at the shop, finding ways to work within our protocol. When possible, work is done outdoors alone or in a small group (always with a mask)!



Indoors it is still solo work or with good social distancing working on the school program boats for the Fall.



Distancing is tougher when working on the new raffle boat, but still goes on with masks and all the doors and windows open for ventilation.



Donated boats keep us busy, answering inquiries and showing the boats to prospective buyers. Currently we have a Canoe, a Lightning and a Penguin.



16' Wooden Newman Grass River racing Canoe.

All of this year's events are cancelled but we are healthy, busy and moving forward. Stop by, we would like to see you, just wear a mask and keep a distance.

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# Boat Building with Popi

By Richard Honan

There's a lot of satisfaction that comes with building a boat. There's the satisfaction of the actual building of the boat and the satisfaction of looking at the finished boat sitting in the water. There are also other rewards. When my grandchildren were younger they liked to come to my workshop on a Sunday morning and help t build his boat. When completed, Popi would take them out for a sail or a row out to Snake Island or teach them how to sail.

Now Popi's rewards are bigger and the grandchildren are now older and smarter. They can really help Popi. They are quick learners and good problem solvers. They took the boat building challenges of learning how clamps work, how to ben d wood, drilling holes and driving screws and how to use sandpaper. They took to boat building like ducks to water. Popi is very happy!



## Slow and Steady as She Goes

Building the 13' peapod, another day of boat building, with my young neighbor, Christian Buonopane. Using a variety of wood planes, we shaped the round 10' sprit which will be used to control the sail shape.

We then installed the forward and stern seat frames using TotalBoat 2/1 epoxy and some stainless steel screws. Besides being a place to sit, the forward seat also provides the structural element for keeping the unstayed mast upright. And then we sanded and then we sanded some more.



## Another Morning of Boat Building

Another morning of boat building with my grand daughters Anna and Emily. We started off with sanding the new floor boards and then moved inside the 13' peapod hull to attach two of the 12' seat cleats. We learned about mixing epoxy, cordless drills and drivers, pilot holes, stainless steel fasteners and the often misunderstood torque control and why it's important.







## Correcting One Mistake After Another

My young neighbor, Christian Buono-pane and I worked on the centerboard box and the seats. We were using Totalboat 2/1 epoxy as the adhesive and stainless steel screws as the mechanical fasteners.

It's funny, but with boat building, even with good planning and the proper tools, everything takes two to three times longer than you thought. Then when you factor in "oops, I should have thought of that," it takes even longer. I remember someone saying, "boat building is correcting one mistake after another." So true, so true!

Christian has been working with me for almost three years, starting when he was in the eighth grade and now he'll be entering Winthrop High School as a member of the Class of 2023.

## A Very Rewarding Day

Today, we got new masks or respirators. Using the plans as a guide, Anna and Emily made cardboard mockups of the bow and stern seats. It was only a measuring mistake on my part that encouraged them to learn how to read the plans and use a scale ruler to find my mistake. A very rewarding day!



The catboat is getting very close to completion. By the time this is read the boat will have been launched and sailed, I presume. As of now I am tweaking the spars and sail and the hardware that will be permanently attached. I have made some changes that the designer, Phil Bolger, had listed on the plans and instruction list.

One thing was the lines. All lines were recommended to be  $\frac{1}{4}$ ". That is not what I used and would recommend  $\frac{3}{8}$ " at least or  $\frac{1}{2}$ " (better) for the halyards and mainsheet. I used  $\frac{1}{4}$ " for the throat halyard because I had some but I will eventually replace that with larger diameter,  $\frac{1}{4}$ " is just too thin. It is strong enough but there is not much to grab and hold onto and pull. The peak and the main sheet are  $\frac{5}{16}$ " for now and I will keep them that way until I see how things work out when sailing. Both lines are just barely thick enough to pull or hold onto.

The other thing I found to be a little difficult was the halyards. They are on either side of the mast and run down to the cleats. I found that with the boom connection so low at the mast, it was difficult to reach the throat or peak because I had to reach under the boom from the opposite side. Not sure how that will work out when the boat is in the water bobbing around. I added deck blocks to help with this and I will have to see if it helps. I still have to reach under while the boom is swinging.

The plans called for the spars to be about  $2\frac{1}{4}$ " square at the maximum of both and narrower at the ends, the edges to be rounded over  $\frac{1}{4}$ ". They were to be made of Douglas fir. I found that diameter to be too thin and flexible. For now I used lumberyard "hem-fir" as the big box store calls it. It is hemlock, a very soft and light wood and not the best for this application. It's temporary for now. To make them I just glued up two pieces of  $2"x4"x16'$  rounded somewhat.

The boom was made from a Swedish import called "white wood" by the big box store of  $1"x3"x16'$  pine of some sort (very clear) glued up and cut to  $13'$  and rounded the edges for the gaff. The jaws were made of sapele of my own (ugly) design as I had a dif-

## Bolger Harbinger

### Update Part 3

By Greg Grundtisch

ficult time making the one from the drawing work well.

The connections on the gaff for the peak and for reefing were changed, too. I used about  $4'$  of  $\frac{3}{16}$ " wire rope with a span shackle attachment. It just seemed a simpler way to do it, much like I had on other gaffs.

The mast is a bear to handle. It came with the boat and is very heavy, made of solid Douglas fir. The problem is lifting it up onto the deck and through the partners and balancing it vertically while trying to get it into the step below without breaking anything, like my back. I found myself barely able to hold the lower  $5'$  of it while balancing the remaining  $10'$  and  $70$ lbs in the air. It very much wanted to concede to gravity's pull.

I had once lost control of a skipjack mast doing the very same thing. I broke it over the (horse) traveler. This tree would crush the transom if it let go. If this boat was to stay in the water all the time it wouldn't matter, but as it is to be a trailer boat stepping and pulling the mast every time I want to sail becomes a real problem. The solution will be a lighter hollow mast of the bird's mouth type or a tabernacle of some sort. A project for next winter.

The sail is tanbark and came with the boat. It seems well made but somewhat heavy for its size. It isn't the full size the plans call for but it's so close that for now I will use it. It is only about  $8sf$  less.

Most of the hardware is bronze and I was fortunate to have most of what I needed from other boats or projects and my past junk boat scavenging. I also had plenty of paint and varnish which determined the color scheme, Beige for the hull and Hunter green for the decks and waterline. The sheer strake is mahogany, same for the rub rail, not yet installed. There was no set location for mooring docking cleats so I used two bronze cleats aft port and starboard and two of ash I had

from the Winter Brothers for the halyards on deck. The plans actually called for wood cleats there. The stem of mahogany has a bronze rod horizontally through it for mooring and anchoring. I haven't added cleats toward the bow yet, not sure if they are needed.

The plans call for mahogany for the floorboards, thwart seat and other parts but the plans were from around the 1970s. At that time mahogany (Philippine) was abundant and cheap. Not so today. Today cedar (seats and floorboards) costs what mahogany did back then, maybe more? Philippine mahogany is difficult to find, if at all, due to the import embargo. Most "mahogany" nowadays is meranti or sapele, said to be a sustainable tropical hardwood with a very similar appearance. Maybe from a distance. It does make good looking but expensive plywood.

I had some Philippine mahogany up in the shop rafters that I had bought 20 years ago and used it for the coaming sides. The front of the coaming was a piece of mahogany that came with the boat. There is a night and day difference between 1970 Philippine and the 20-year-old stuff I had. The older stuff is much darker and denser.

I used the original rudder design and not the shorter "newer" version with a bottom plate attached. Mahogany was called for but I used two pieces of  $\frac{3}{4}$ " ply glued together and covered with two layers of cloth set in epoxy. I did alter the shape above the waterline just for looks.

The remaining work is just odds and ends, some touchup paint and varnish and screwing down the floorboards and maybe adding some sort of boom gallows or crutch. Once I have sailed her a couple of times the necessary adjustments will be made and the lovely and talented Naomi will have a nice little  $15'$  trailer sailer to take on her well deserved staycations or vacations.

We are still working on a name for her. I thought of *Virocat*, *My Corona*, *Kitty Karona*, *Caronacat*, *Shelter Kat* or some derivation of that due to the free time I had during the New York State virus shutdown. The actual name will be revealed in the final installment.

One more month of paid sheltering and it's likely I'll be back to work if the governor allows it in the next phase of reopening. We hope all are managing this "new normal," as it has been regularly referred to, and are safe and healthy and that some semblance of the "old normal" returns.







## Harbinger A Great Boat

By Bill Rutherford

I have been following Greg Grundtisch's Harbinger rehab in *MAIB*. I'm glad he liked our "Two Cats Loose in Muscongus Bay" article. *Cactus Wren* has been actively sailed since then in Upstate New York lakes, Barnegat Bay and lately here in Stonington, Connecticut.

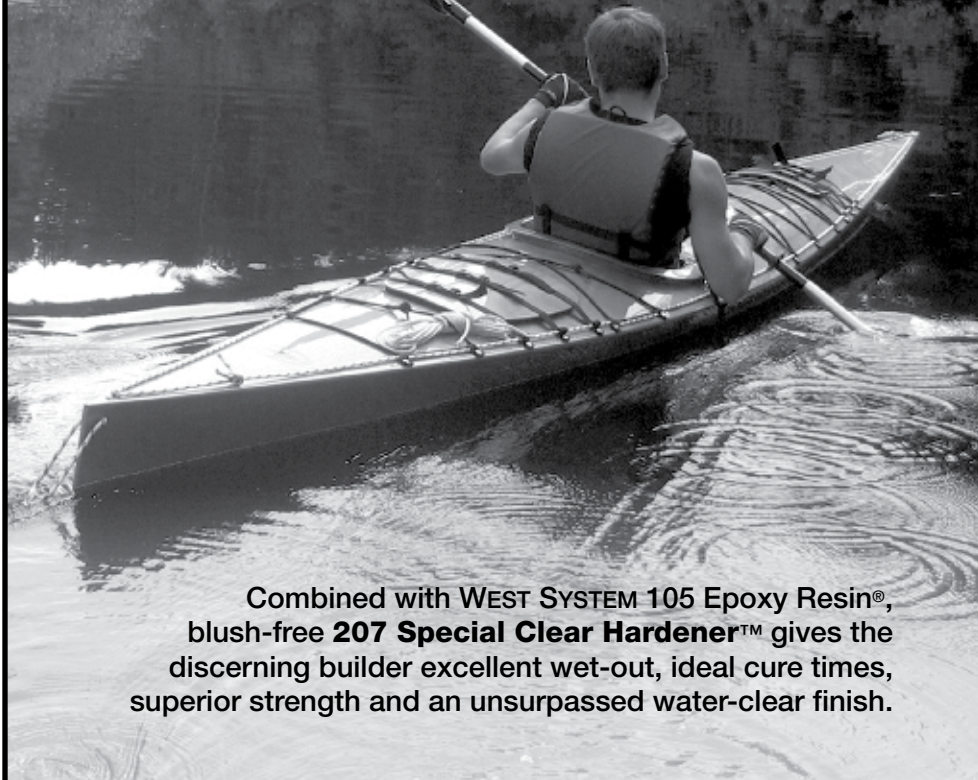
*Cactus Wren* is a great boat and loved by the family. She turns 37 this year. Came a long way from Casa Grande, Arizona (hence her name). We built her per plan but cold molded since we're trailer sailors. We used western red cedar, mahogany and pecan wood because that is what was available. A few minor mods, a narrow afterdeck for a traveler, canting the coaming back 15° for comfort and, years later, adding a cuddy to hide our milk crates full of stuff. Rigging changes were minor, our sailmaker decided to make the sail loose footed, we added a topping lift and, after breaking a couple of masts, a forestay.

But to one point, we have never had her over. Those wide decks are very forgiving. The rowing thwart is where designed, the only trophy she ever won was for a rowing race (10' oars make a difference). BTW, the oars do fit under the side decks. As a family we have tent camped for years from California to Florida to New Jersey to include Maine's Small Reach Regatta.

A great boat, I would not change a thing. Everything I have changed I put back. Even the cuddy, as I dance around the mooring on that postage stamp sized foredeck. Bolger put a lot of thought into the design.



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"Boy, has this boat got a tale to tell," Bill Mullen, one of the more recent owners of *Susan* repeated his dramatic statement.

"OK," I chirped, "lay it on me."

Mullen spent the better part of the next hour laying out his belief that *Susan*, ex-*Sunnyside*, the catboat described in Part 1 of this epic, was none other than the legendary *Marvel*, a boat seldom bested in her brief but exciting racing career in Massachusetts Bay. Over the years, based on research given him from a previous owner, Bill had invested considerable time comparing *Susan*'s lines, especially those of her sheer, with photographs of *Marvel* taken during races held in the 1904-1906 seasons.

"If this indeed is the *Marvel*," Bill continued, "you've got one of the only surviving D-Class catboats left in existence, a very rare bird and one worthy of a first class restoration."

As previously reported, I had taken delivery of the boat from Cape Cod to Westport, Massachusetts, and had just begun to assess and prioritize what needed to be done to return the boat to a seaworthy state. This new information, if valid, would force me to rethink how best to accomplish the "first class restoration" that a boat as historic as *Marvel* demanded.

The question, of course, was how best to conduct the validation process without letting the boat deteriorate any further? A three track process emerged.

The first track would explore the provenance of the boat with any surviving former owners or their families. My hope was that this top down approach might allow me to follow a trail back to the original owner or owners.

For the second track, I would once again ask author and catboat historian Stan Grayson for help in combing through his extensive catboat archives in the hope that he might assemble a bottoms up path forward from her creation in the boat shop of Herbert F. Crosby, through her racing career and beyond.

The third track would involve prioritizing a restoration schedule designed to halt further deterioration without in any way altering the historical aspects of the boat such as her lines or topside structures.

With this, the game was afoot. "Nothing to it!" I thought. "Ha!"

### Track 1: Provident Provenance

Bill Mullen had purchased the boat, then called *Sunnyside*, from two Long Island, New York, sailors, Hoda Kaplin and Jeff Megerdichian, in 1995. My search would begin there. Sadly, using a combination of Google and LinkedIn searches, I came to learn that both individuals had "crossed over the bar." In fact, Hoda's passing in 1995 more than likely led to Jeff selling the boat. So this first attempt had literally met a dead end.

That brought Walter Krasniewicz up to the plate. Walter belonged to the Catboat Association ([www.catboats.org](http://www.catboats.org)) and his first 20 year resurrection and second ten year renovation of *Sunnyside* had earned him the coveted Broad Axe Award. (Figure 1)

Established in 1976, the Award recognizes "significant achievement in catboat construction" broadly construed to include restoration of an old cat. The Award consists of a broad axe that belonged to catboat builders Charles C. Hanley from 1886 to 1936 and Merton E. Long from 1936 to 1976.

Walter was no longer a member of the CBA but with the CBA's help, and from past

## A Marvelous Mystery

### In Pursuit of a Catboat Legend Part 2: A Three Track Adventure

By John Conway

copies of the Catboat Association's Yearbook, I learned that Walter had lived in Connecticut and kept *Sunnyside* there as well. I hoped that a Google and LinkedIn search that concatenated Krasniewicz + CT might prove successful, if he remained among the living. Sadly, he did not:

"Walter J. (Bucky) Krasniewicz, a lifelong resident of Stamford, died Sunday, November 27, 2005, surrounded by his loved ones. He is survived by his six children, Kathryn H. Greene of Guilford, Connecticut, Mary Ann of Corte Madera, California, Thomas P. of Stratford, Connecticut, Timothy W. of Denver, Colorado, Elizabeth Buckley of Portland, Maine, and Patrick J. of Atlanta, Georgia."

However, Walter's obituary did point me in the direction of his surviving children. Undaunted, I once again turned to the internet, sent each of Walter's children a description of our project, asked if they remembered *Sunnyside* (sic!) and if they had interest in helping with my Track 1 research. Much to my delight, Kathryn replied:

"Hi John, we had her for over 30 years and enjoyed many sails, and yes there are many pics and tales of *Sunnyside*. I will see what I can locate. Best regards, Kathryn."

In the weeks that followed Kathryn sent (and continues to send) photos and documents chronicling the 33 year history of *Sunnyside*'s life with the Krasniewicz family (to date, unfortunately, no luck in identifying who Walter purchased the boat from). Kathryn confirmed that her dad had rescued the boat from a field "somewhere in Connecticut" in 1962 (not 1965 as previously reported) as a total derelict. (Figure 2)

He had the wreck delivered to his home on a flatbed truck. Kathryn reminisces:

"I remember the day *Sunnyside* (at this point she was unnamed) was brought to our house in Stamford, Connecticut. To help restore the boat, dad hired boat builders from Luder's Yacht Yard in Stamford (builders of the America's Cup boats *American Eagle* and *Weatherly*). They worked on *Sunnyside* in their spare time. Kathryn was not sure why her dad "fell in love" with the old bucket, but he did, enough so that he invested the next four years having the entire vessel rebuilt from stem to sternpost. ("The Resurrection," Figures 3 and 4)

In 1982 Walter initiated a second rebuild that once again included replacing her mast, spars, sail, keel, transom and engine. ("The Restoration") Completed in 1984, *Sunnyside* went on to win a first place finish in the Sailboat Restoration Division at the 1985 Mystic Seaport Antique and Classic Boat Rendezvous. (Figure 5)

In one of her emails Kathryn explained that, on occasion, her dad would sail with a close friend, cartoonist Peter Wells of Katzenjammer Kids fame. After each adventure together Peter would reward Walter with a cartoon depicting some aspect of the recently completed trip. Figure 6 shows one of these, from which we can deduce that neither Walter nor Peter had mastered the art of galley cooking.

(Note: Kathryn Green continues to comb through the family's *Sunnyside* archives in search of additional tales and treasures. More as they surface in future installments.)

### Track 2: The Woodpile Historian

Kind soul that he is, Stan Grayson put his capabilities into high gear and initiated his Track 2 *Marvel* research by conducting online searches of *The Rudder Magazine* back issues. Published from 1891 to 1977, the magazine covered virtually everything and everyone connected with yachting. It was and is a goldmine of information for anyone interested in the history of recreational boating during this period.

With the advent of the internet, several institutions have taken the trouble to scan every issue and make them available for use by the public. The Hathi Trust Digital Library, a collaborative of many institutions, is one of the best ([www.hathitrust.org](http://www.hathitrust.org)). The Hathi system allows academic users to keyword search through all 80+ years that the magazine was published.

Stan decided to start there. In a remarkably short period of time, from pages that look like that of Figure 7, Stan had assembled a *Marvel*-ous amount of information covering the years 1905 through 1907.

Stan reported, "*Marvel* was most likely built in 1904 by Herbert F. Crosby, not 1905 as you were told. She was owned, perhaps from new but certainly in 1906 by Ira M. Whittemore and was "the flagship" of the Cape Catboat Association (CCA) a racing club founded in 1905. Whittemore, the CCA's first president, was also a member and former Commodore of the Quincy (Massachusetts) Yacht Club (QYC). One of the *Rudder* photos clearly shows her flying the pennant of the QYC (Figure 8).

Curiously, Whittemore sold the boat in, if I understand correctly, the spring of 1907 and replaced her with C.C. Hanley's *Almira*. I found no indication that whoever bought *Marvel* raced her but Whittemore, a Quincy, Massachusetts, businessman (President of Durgin Whittemore Glass Company, an enterprise still in business!), remained active with his new Hanley boat, a real racehorse. When you look back at the fastest D-Class catboats there were some great ones, *Arawak*, *Almira*, *Dolly III* and *Marvel*. D-Class boats were still racing in the '20s. Whittemore died in 1944."

"Going forward, John," Stan suggested, "you'll need to search the archives of *The Boston Globe* and the records in the Hart Nautical Collection at MIT. You should also plan to pay a visit to the Osterville Historical Museum on Cape Cod as well as the Crosby Yacht Yard (also still in business!). Clearly you will also need to locate and chat with any surviving members of the Whittemore family, the current owners of Durgin-Whittemore Glass and the officers at the Quincy Yacht Club."

Yikes! It suddenly looked like Track 2 could take a while. And we had yet to answer the question, "Was *Sunnyside*/*Susan* the *Marvel* at birth?"





Figure 1: Walter Krasniewicz, restorer and skipper of *Sunnyside*, proudly displays his 1987 Catboat Association's Broad Axe Award.



Figure 2: The derelict *Sunnyside* in 1962



Figure 4: *Sunnyside* resurrected.

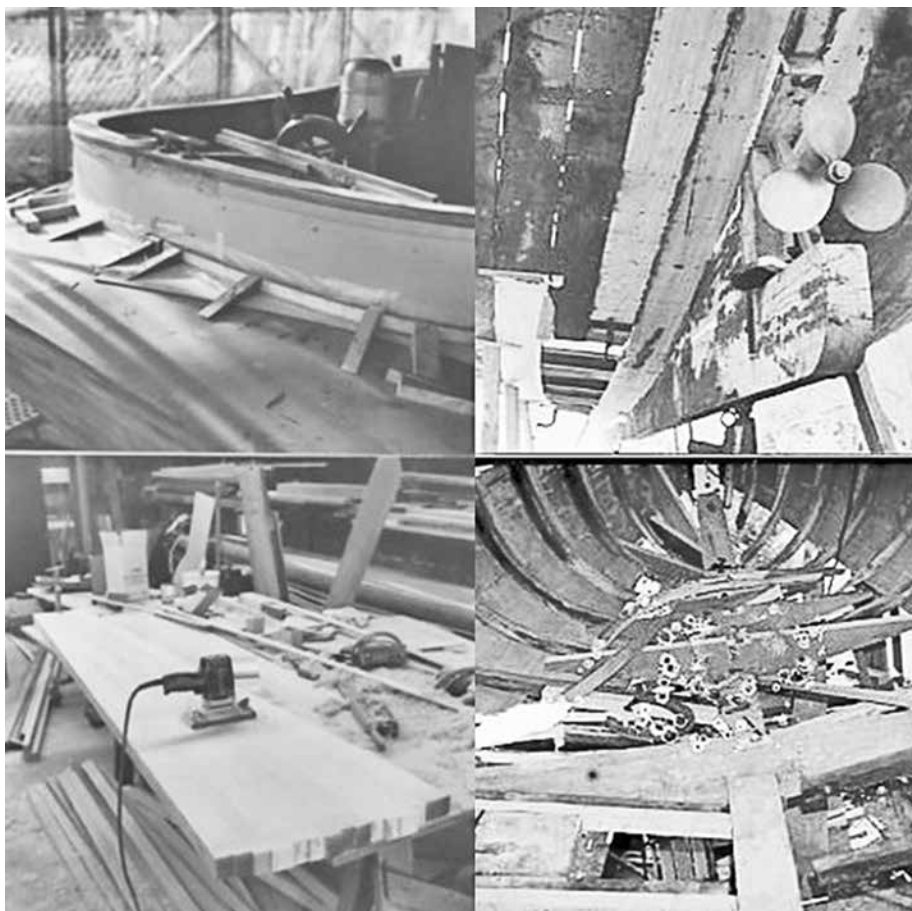


Figure 3: *Sunnyside*'s resurrection phase when just about everything was replaced.



Figure 5: *Sunnyside* at Mystic Seaport, a First Place finish in sailboat restoration.





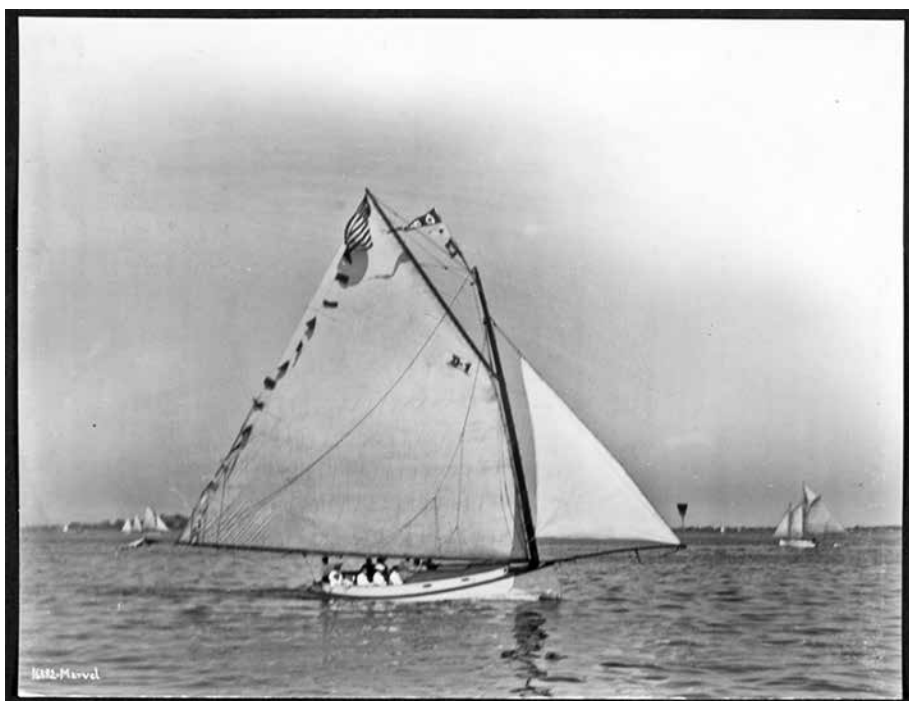


Figure 6: Katzenjammer Kids cartoonist Peter Wells enjoyed Spartan grub aboard *Sunnyside*.



Figure 7: Typical *Rudder* Magazine page. Note *Marvel* comments.

Figure 8: *Marvel* under sail c:1905 off Wollaston Beach, Quincy, Massachusetts.



### Track 3: Mixed Mediums

Meanwhile, back in the Tripp boatyard, the task prioritization process continued. Inspection of the boat's port side, once paint had been stripped, revealed that at some point in her life restorers, perhaps Walter's crew, decided to refasten her above the waterline with a curious type of bronze fastener. It looks somewhat like a cut or cast nail with a large, flat head. (Figure 9. Note: If any reader recognizes these please let us know. No expert contacted has ever seen this type of boat fastener.)



Figure 9: One of the many hundreds of unique bronze fittings securing *Marvel*'s planking.

These had all been driven into the newer ribs that had been "sistered" beside the old. Unfortunately the boat had originally been fastened with galvanized iron fasteners. Over the years the interaction between the bronze and the iron conspired, via galvanic action, to create a pseudo battery that slowly dissolved the fittings and introduced nail sickness into the planking. (Figure 10)

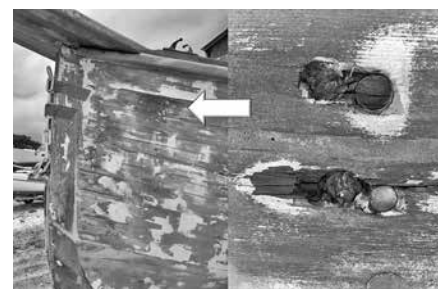


Figure 10: The taboo mixing of bronze and iron fasteners led to galvanic damage.

This discovery pushed the removal of the corroded fasteners, repairs to the damaged planking and its subsequent refastening to the top of the restoration priority list. The techniques utilized are, of course, a story unto themselves.

(To be Continued)

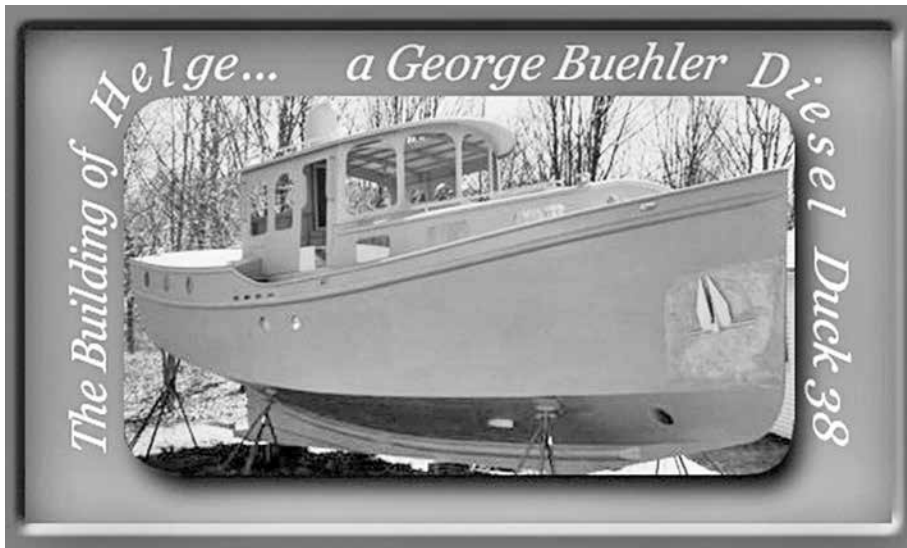
(The author would greatly appreciate donations as small as \$1 to support the grassroots project restoring this historic catboat. These can be directly made to:

<https://gogetfunding.com/marvel-an-historic-boat-restoration-project/>)



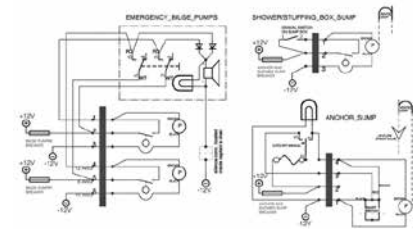
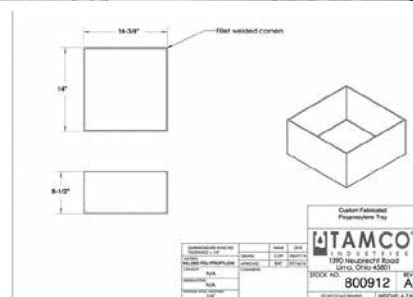
# The Building of *Helge* A George Buehler Diesel Duck Part 13

Wendell Gallagher is building a Buehler Diesel Duck 38. He had the steel hull built at a yard and trucked to his home and is doing the rest himself.



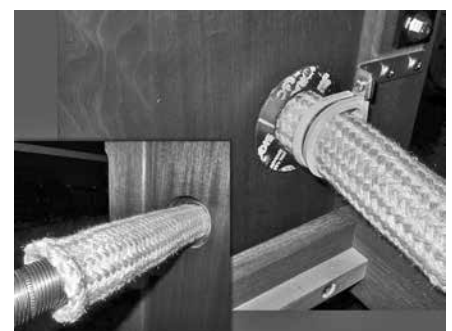
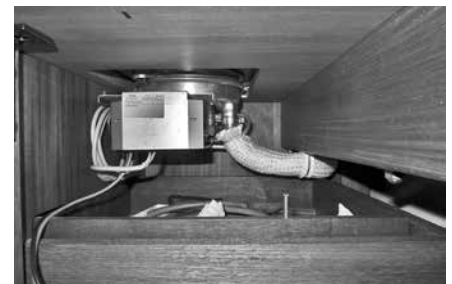
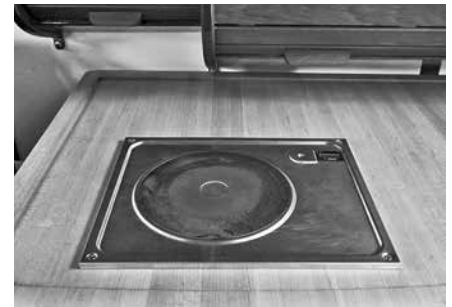
## The Shower Sump

*Helge's* shower drain and stuffing box are sharing a common sump. The seven gallon sump tray was custom welded by TAMCO Industries. I installed a perforated hair catch to protect the low profile Whale Supersub 500. The reliable float switch uses mercury.

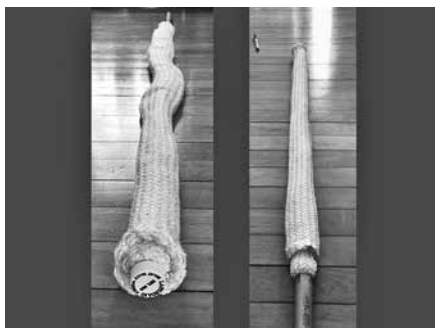


## The Wallas Hot Plate

*Helge's* Wallas hot plate runs on K-1 Kerosene. It's ready for cooking in under two minutes. Its purpose is to supplement the slower Dickenson Diesel stove which takes an hour to reach full heat. The hot plate adjusts from a gentle simmer to a roiling boil. It exhausts through the back of the Dickenson. The 2.5 gallon (10 liter) fuel tank will last for 100 plus hours of cooking.

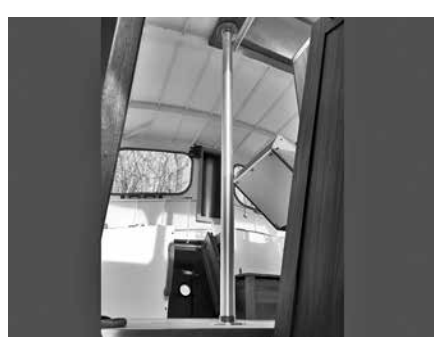
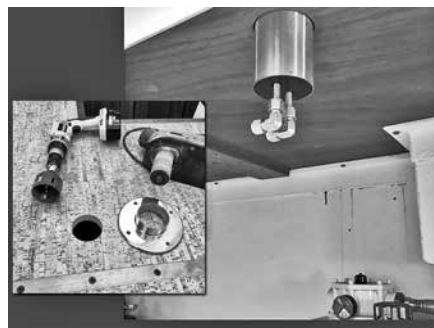


Doubling the insulation by pulling it through on itself.



## Solar Plumbing

*Helge's* solar plumbing hides inside a brass grab pole. The solar coil will mount inside the wheelhouse upper hatch. The pole is both insulated and plugged.

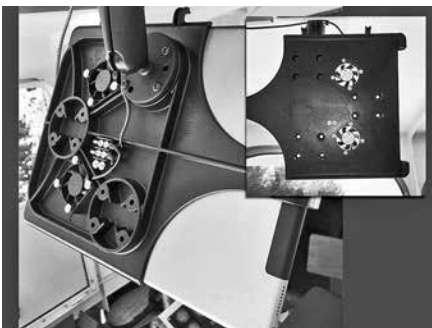


## Navigation

*Helge* uses an iPad Pro running iNavX for navigation and a Furuno DRS4W Wireless Radar for collision avoidance. The iPad communicates with the ComNav autopilot through a wireless iMux router. The main computer, the iMux router and the backup iPhone all use independent GPS antennas.

The wireless radar installation is very straightforward requiring only a 12v power source (no need to run a multi wire data cable). The radar can simultaneously link with two monitors allowing the waterproof iPhone Xs to serve as a mobile display while underway (keeping an eye out during a quick visit to the head or grabbing a bite to eat). Furuno's intuitive software uses click and drag to measure range and bearing or setting Guard Zones.





## The Windlass

*Helge's* Maxwell VWC 2200 electric windlass is powered through the house batteries. Its main breaker and switch panel are located in the forward pantry. The windlass is controlled on deck by foot switches.

The stainless anchor has a stop gap welded onto its shank to assist in seating the assembly. The 450lb 300'  $\frac{3}{8}$ " galvanized chain rode uses a red, then white, then blue marker every 50'. We used the colors of our flag to help us remember their order.

The chain's bitter end is secured to the hull with a cutting line to facilitate an emergency dump. The chain locker is coated with rubber Durabak to protect the hull.

(Please ignore *Helge's* failing paint. Twenty years ago I mis measured the epoxy ratio. We plan to repaint just before launch.)





25 Years Ago  
in **MAIB**

# Build Your Own International Offshore 14 Racer/Cruiser

By Nils Andersson

The idea of the Offshore 14 development class came when I was reading an article about the French Voiles 6.50 Meter offshore, development class (about 21.45'). This is a very popular offshore racing class, with 70 to 80 participating boats, divided into production and a racing classes, racing from Europe to the West Indies each fall. I thought to my self, "Why not 14'?" I contacted the French Class Association and they were kind enough to send me their rules. The rules are rather free. There is only one measurement, the LOA.

I started to write a similar rule adapted to the 14' boat, giving it the name International Offshore 14. Any mono-hull conforming with the class rules is eligible, for example, the "So-Du-It!" design. To make it an easy boat to build for do it yourself builders, I included the following materials rule:

Plywood must be included in all hull and deck panels and in the superstructure. Use of materials with a density greater than that of lead is not permitted. Only two measurements are included in the rules, maximum LOA 14' and a minimum vertical measurement inside the cabin, 48". There is a maximum of 100 liters of water ballast.

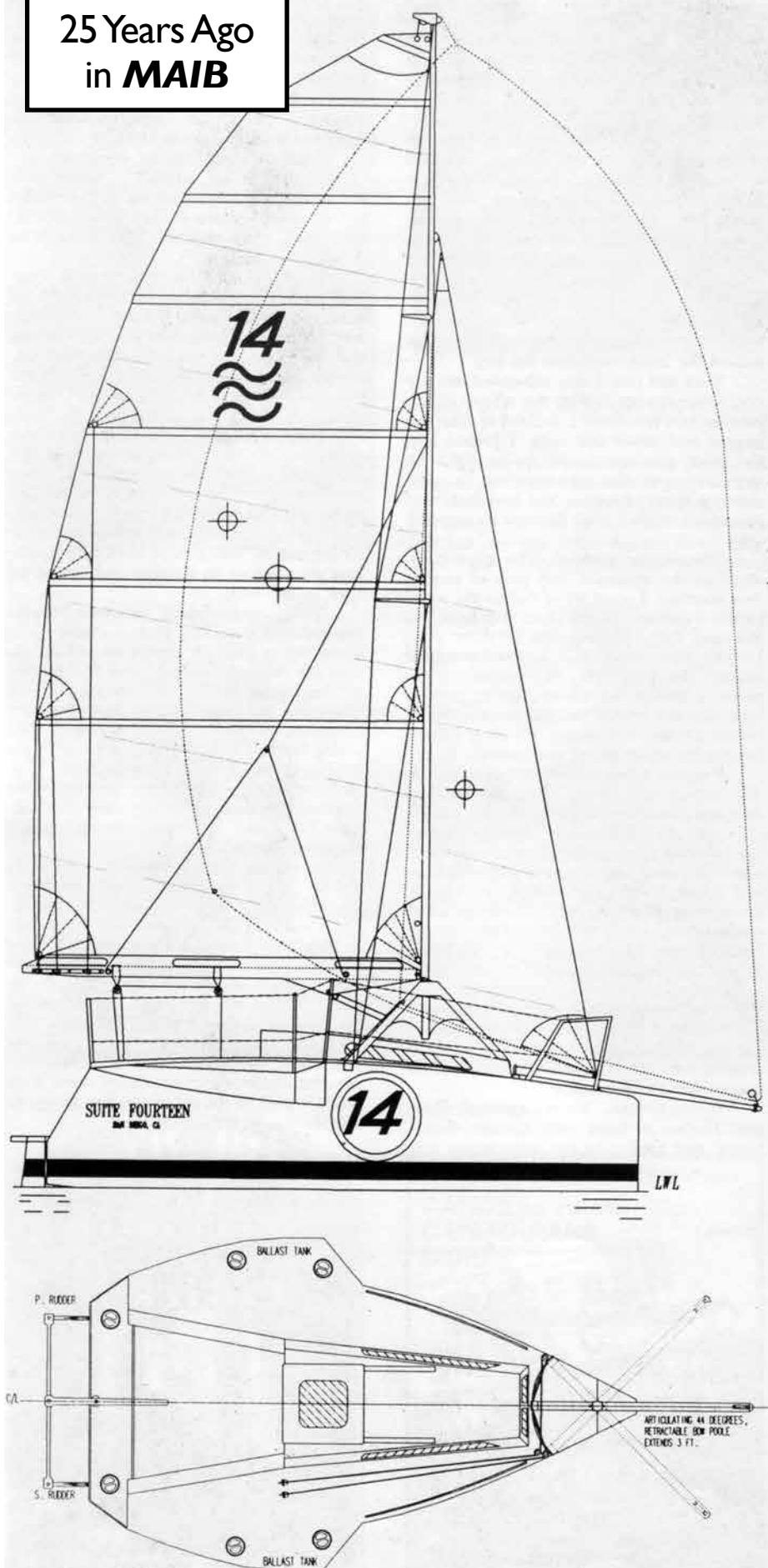
There are no other limits, mother nature takes care of the rest. There is a righting test and many safety rules, which are still in the drafting stage. The class will be registered with the US Sailing as an active Class Association during 1995-96.

The boat is not particularly intended for extreme long distance racing. It will be more like coastal 1-6 day events and unlimited cruising of course. If the class intends to race across oceans, the difference in the cost of equipment is enormous.

The Nils Andersson International Offshore 14 design, "Suite Fourteen", is my contribution to the class. Behind the design is more than 40 years of dinghy development and racing at an international level, as well as 2 years of experimenting with the 14' offshore, "So-Du-It!" design. Designing the "Suite Fourteen" I used the Plyboats software and a CAD program. I created a 1/5 scale hull model, which I have tested for about two months before completing the design.

The plans will include some instructions, "How to", from the start to the end of the building process. Also included are easy to follow computer generated tables of offsets for framing, bulkheads and cutting the planking. If you are an experienced builder, you probably have your own proven methods and routines.

However, there are some unique and slightly uncommon building methods suggested in building the "Suite Fourteen", all aimed at saving weight and at the same time improving strength. The construc-



tion of the "Suite Fourteen" utilizes, beside epoxy, plywood and foam, some space age materials such as kevlar and carbon fiber. These materials are excellent to work with and are getting more affordable by the day, at the same time that the price of lumber tends to skyrocket. All the plywood used in the boat is laminated, 1/8 inch lauan doorskin plywood carried by any home builder outfit.

The "Suite Fourteen" is designed with 704lbs. of displacement. On a small boat like this, the crew weight distribution is an important part of the righting moment. In my case, sailing single handed, my weight is 29% of the displacement. Add another "full size" crew member and there will be an even greater impact. Therefore, it doesn't take a rocket scientist to figure out that moving the crew in the lateral plane will be an extremely important factor. The deck area covering the outboard water ballast tanks doubles as hiking boards. The 8'6" beam over deck will give a good leverage. The crew is surrounded by the life lines.

The water ballast will be very important when sailing single handed or with a light crew. The tanks have two compartments, fore and aft, and can be filled by a manual and/or electric pump, intake from the transom (no through hull connections are needed). The water ballast can be transferred from one side to the other, by heeling the boat 12 degrees and opening the valves, before tacking. The tanks are equipped with "air pipes".

Water ballast is extremely efficient as long as you don't carry it below the water line, where its containers, for example, keel or bilges, generate a buoyant force that tends to counteract the ballast. Water is easy to move around and pour over board when it is not needed. Try to dump a crew member over board and you will hear loud protests.

The permanent ballast consists of a lead bulb weighing 200lbs., attached to the tip of the retractable fin, 5' 5-1/2" down. The bulb will make the boat self righting. The design of the fin keel and casing has been tested on "So Du-It!". The

top of the fin and the casing have flanges and gaskets, and the fin is held down and tightened with bolts and wing nuts.

The "Suite Fourteen" will be able to exceed its formula hull speed upwind and downwind at wind speeds over 10 knots, ie by planing. This boat should be sailed extremely upright, although it could heel 30 degrees before the empty, forward ballast tank hits the water. The tank will then be a buoyant factor, but that is a slow way to sail.

I have elected this particular sail configuration for many reasons. The high aspect sail is very efficient when you sail to weather. The boat is slightly over canvased but the one line reefing system with lazy-jacks, together with a unique Y-shaped boom, will give you the benefit of fast adjusting to most wind conditions. The elliptical sail shape makes the center of sail area move very little forward when reefed, compared to a triangular sail. A large main sail area together with an asymmetric spinnaker, equipped with a sleeve and sock, will give you easy handling and the right down wind performance for racing or cruising. I will have Sailrite Kits design and cut my own set of sails.

The retractable bow pole should be made articulating. The carbon fiber tripod mast step distributes the mast compression to three points. Additionally, the forward force of the boom is also applied to the tripod, not to the mast. There are two backswept sets of spreaders, so a backstay will not be necessary. However there will be a pair of runners, used in strong wind, sailing before the wind. When not in use, the runners will be held in to the mast with shock cords. The carbon fiber mast weighs only 18lbs.

To hold a short and beamy boat like this on track can be a handful. The traditional solution would be a full length keel combined with a skeg. As everybody can see that's not how this boat is designed. I have preferred to go for low drag, using the power efficiently. The best solution, in this case, is the use of two high aspect ratio rudders. Incidentally, that is also how most of the Voiles 6.5 Class boats have

solved their steering problems. It is also common on BOC boats.

The basic interior layout shows a 6' V-berth and two quarter berths under the cockpit sides, but it can be customized by the builder as long as the superstructure is not changed. All stringers, bulkheads and frames are connected and also to the fin casing and the mast tripod. There will be plenty of room for stowage. There is also room for a portable head, close to the companionway on the port side and a navigation and radio station on the starboard side. I am using the Seacock gimbaled stove on "So-Du-It!" it can be used with alternative brackets outside or inside.

Most of the space under the berths will be filled with foam for positive flotation in at least three separate compartments. A small boat like this can not carry a life raft. Instead, the rules will include a mandatory survival suit for each crew member. Even if the boat breaks apart and or is flooded, it is safer to stay with it and wait for help.

The area in front of the watertight bulkhead at station 1 (12" from the bow) is an impact area and is filled with two-part pour foam and has a center line vertical stringer connected to the bulkhead, stem, keel and deck. It is only covered with the skin of kevlar, covering the whole hull. Also, it makes the bow section extremely light. There is also a watertight bulkhead at station 13. The stern section is also designed with weight savings in mind.

For more information on the International Offshore-14 or the "Suite Fourteen" design, contact Nils Andersson, 1269 Broadway, Suite 121, El Cajon, CA 92021.

Design: Nils Andersson

LOA: 14'

LWL: 13' 8"

Extreme Beam: 8' 6"

Draft Fin Down: 5' 5"

Draft Fin Up: 9"

Displacement: 704lbs.

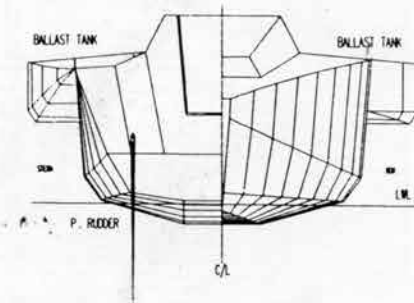
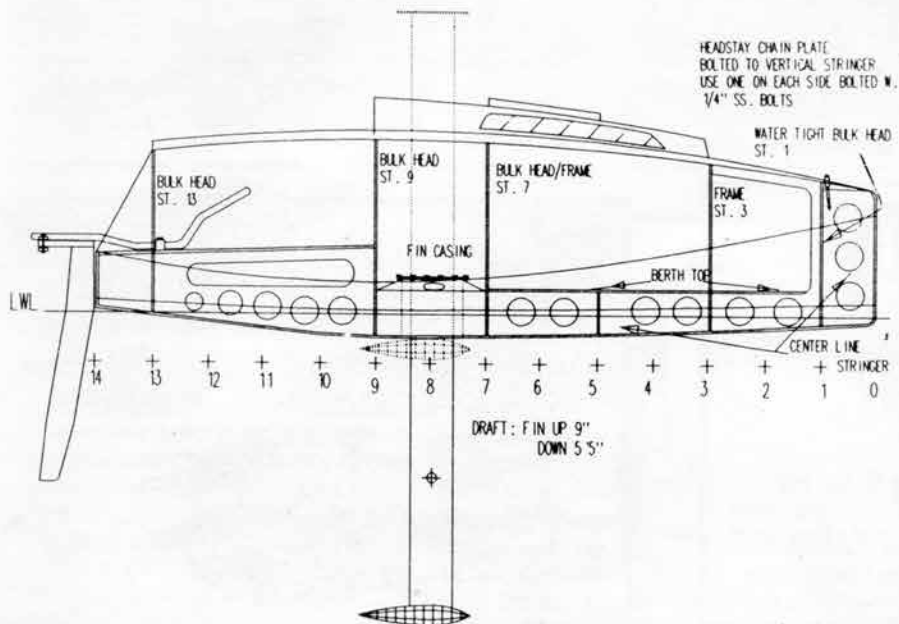
Ballast: 200lbs. Lead Bulb, Attached to the Tip of the Fin.

Water ballast: 100 Liters = 228lbs. Salt Water.

Water Intake by a Manual or Electric Pump from the Transom.

Estimated Hull Weight: 250lbs.

Sail Area, Working, 200 sq.ft. Asymmetric Spinnaker, 250 sq.ft.



# Building an 8-foot Open Canoe

~ The Jackson Double-Paddle Solo Pram ~ by Paul Apps

HAVE YOU EVER HANKERED FOR THAT CANOE you once had, that was lightweight, low in paraphernalia, a bit tippy and took you amongst ducks and reeds, giving you such fun so close to the water? When reading on the DCA CD about the passing of Talbot Kirk at 104 years, and his voyages (*Bulletin 192*), my desire for another canoe was kindled. Keith and Jennifer's circumnavigation of Bassenthwaite (*DC244*) in his blow-up describes such delights: the elements, the wind, serenity, the edge and shallows, being able to step out and walk in the water or lift the boat ashore. Though not a true DCA qualifying dinghy I hope the purists will find this tale worth a read.



I get a buzz from woodwork and the idea of making another canoe for my 7 year old grandson took hold. My first canoe, a PBK10, first floated from the northeast shore of Coniston where my parents rented a tent lodge. My older sister, who had never canoed and with no buoyancy

aid, got hold of the paddles, jumped in as the maiden voyager and set off for the middle of the lake. Father was dumbfounded and I was distraught when she came back.

This pram design choice was influenced by the features of the Gremlin dinghy I made after the canoe. I spotted the Jackson plans on the Duckworks website. It seemed a close fit for what I was looking for, a short open canoe, and so I ordered the plans. It is constructed upside down on a jig with an old-fashioned hog. I used 4mm Robbins Elite ply instead of 6mm and sheathed the bottom. The lofted panels were wire-tied, epoxy spots between them, ties pulled out, spots faired, joints taped outside and filleted inside, etc. as one does. I am proud to say the gunwales are recycled from a quartered mirror gaff. It was a rotten Mirror someone had burned but he sold me the rigging and trailer years ago. Materials were £200 and I spent 68 hours on the tools. I think it could have been a cheaper and quicker build.



Stability is that of a canoe, however. There is no decking or coaming to keep one central, which is a little strange. One quickly senses that sitting next to the gunwale is impractical. At 14kg it is very lively and when stepping in and out one has to start with one's weight midships. The cross beams are a great help in and out of the water.

I have fallen in once, at Beale in front of our Technical Advisor, who observed with decorum. The DCA advice that the crew should be able to sit on the gunwale without a dunking does not work for this boat. On this subject I managed to sit on the gunwale of my Peapod last year and remained afloat but I have not yet practised flooding it completely; perhaps this year.



(Above) Demountable scooter wheels for transporting





One sits on the bottom of the boat. To raise one's backside above any bilge water I have put a small ply seat on the hog; the additional inch in height improves the paddling and stability reduction is insignificant. Being able to drive it up a shingle bank in shallow water and step over the bow is useful for exploring. The buoyancy compartments provide good dry stowage; there is something about a clean, white-painted buoyancy tank, as a secret dry place within for clothes, etc., and it helps make the whole experience more enjoyable.

When towing, stability on a bicycle is worse than on the water — not safe enough. Towing it by bicycle is fine but one trip was enough on a public road. The ad hoc wheel arrangement with scooter wheels has proved itself over many miles of pushing. Fitted and removed in seconds, they locate on holes which were cut to put small oars through, but alas the boat is too narrow and the pivot point too high to row successfully. It fits inside a VW Tiguan with one rear seat out of action, or on the

(Below) Paul's Bolger Peapod Sweet Pea with the latest arrival

Bulletin	Page	Title
45	15	Thirteen-Foot-Ten to Brittany - Part I (reprinted in: 108/16 & 138/13)
46	9	Thirteen-Foot-Ten to Brittany - Part II (reprinted in: 138/13 and 172/38)
48	13	Rugged Coast - Friendly People: Part I
49	7	Rugged Coast - Friendly People: Part II
49	8	Friends Across the Channel
53	2	Projected French Cruise
54	5	News of Projected French Cruise
56	11	Crossing of "Pat" (13' 6") to Brittany
78	11	West Cornwall Cruise 1970 - Living Aboard 14ft. "Pat" (reprint in: 179/24)
99	12	Yorkshire Canals by Inflatable Canoe
115	15	RDF - The Poor Man's Radar
139	22	Outrigger & Other Modifications on a 'Kirk/Mirror' Dinghy
147	22	Different... but not too Bad
151	37	And Belated Thanks to the RAF
174	11	Not For Sale!

roof. It also fits inside my Bolger peapod, which is handy for trailing both. Normal storage is in the garage, vertical. A no-regrets project which brings more chances to get afloat with the grandchildren. Non-stop fun.

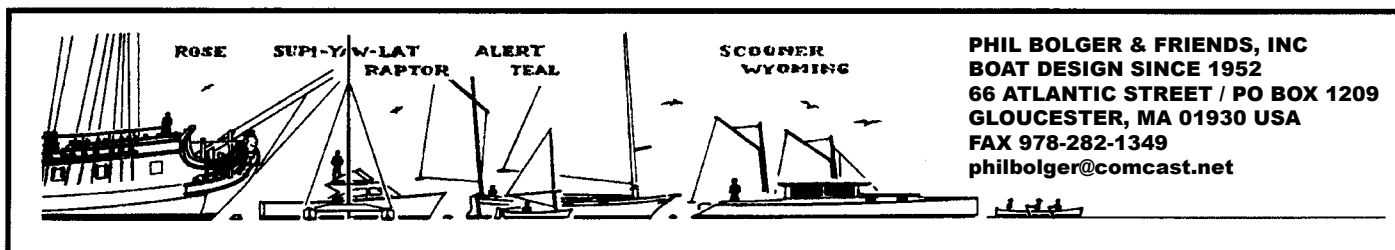
Talbot Kirk was no doubt a truly remarkable sailor and we are lucky to have his stories. See the list of his articles that spanned 30 years, as compiled by Dick Houghton, following this. PA

(Left) Paul's daughter Rebecca takes the pram for a spin

(Bottom of the page) Paul briefly described his Phil Bolger Peapod Sweet Pea in an article that started with the aim of describing seats for boats, as I recall, early in 2019. To obtain the Peapod plans he had to deal with Harold Payson, aka Dynamite Payson, the boat builder who built and tested Bolger's 'instant' boat designs in return for the right to sell the drawings. Paul was suitably impressed. And he still thinks that 'Sweet Pea' has been and still is the best toy I have ever had.'

(Below) A checklist of Talbot Kirk's articles published by the DCA over the years, originally drawn up by Dick Houghton. Check out the title: 'Crossing of Pat (13ft 6ins) to Brittany', if you please! Latterly, towards the final phase of his 104 years on the planet, Talbot built boats in his roof space, which enabled him to perfect the art of creating midge cruisers that could negotiate loft hatches — Ed





**PHIL BOLGER & FRIENDS, INC**  
**BOAT DESIGN SINCE 1952**  
**66 ATLANTIC STREET / PO BOX 1209**  
**GLOUCESTER, MA 01930 USA**  
**FAX 978-282-1349**  
**philbolger@comcast.net**

## Phil Bolger & Friends on Design

Design Column #551 in *MAIB*

Design #503 (aluminum) Sea Bird '86

Design #525 (plywood) Sea Bird '86

23'0"x7'9"x2'6" x 276sf/282sf x 4150lbs

Long Keel Dipping Lugger/Gaff Sloop: Part 2 of 4

Building a Plans Scale Model of the proposed Boatbuilding Project

So what was this about a Sea Bird '86 in Chile, as in South America? David C. from Santiago de Chile had bought a set of plans of her quite a while back and what he did with them is worth a good discussion. It seems likely that it will add up to another three installments, including this one.

This aspect of project planning by first building a Plans Scale Model has not seen much attention in our many design columns here in *MAIB*, meaning this is an overdue discussion around a first reality check of both design and personal wherewithal to try building small and large craft. Lots to be learned with this step before the commitments become increasingly substantial and, if you end up not building her, you'd still have a nice conversation piece on hand. Or, as David volunteers, you may end up with several such, quite apart, as he did, from several smaller 1/1 scale boats actually in the water, particularly if your proposed project is not a beginner's type.

Looking around for a design you might want to consider building can range from the easy delightful digression often so healthy between life's more serious realities towards the increasingly obsessive back and forth that could indeed result in more stress than a pleasure boat project should induce. So many options, so many ways to build, so many likely challenges and delights crafting her from a stack of materials to the first serious cruise. And with a lot of designs on offer you might experience the joys of a kid in a candy store, or better, in a toy store, all the way to overdosing on the good stuff, sugar shock, to show the limits of your feasting. Making yourself feel bad doing nice things suggests a different approach next time around.

Putting together over time an increasingly realistic wish list is imperative to match presumed needs, building location, shop to water logistics on larger projects and, of course personal resources, your emotional, intellectual and physical strength, along with an increasingly well calculated projected budget plus a substantial fudge factor around. And since most of us have been through other more or less ambitious endeavors, apart from having been dragged through the uncertainties of life, we'll have an increasingly sober sense of what might be plausible to attempt.

Still no guarantees, mind you, with a lot of unfinished projects sinking into the ground or disappearing shredded in the landfill as fairly unambiguous warnings of what can indeed happen. In just one reasonably sub-

stantial project to one of our designs illness, divorce and bankruptcy came together with that rather nice boat never completed as far as we know.

However, since building a boat is indeed an exercise in optimism, one further way to clarify things before any major commitments to the construction project have to be made, is building a model out of cardboard or that fancy model aircraft plywood. You may have questions about certain aesthetics, internal clearances or just how the 1/1 scale project would actually go together hands on vs that nice writeup of ours.

And some may not quite see in that flat two dimensional plans format what you'd really rather understand in 3D before committing to the 1/1 project. How folks actually see plans varies tremendously, it being a matter of neurological wiring, perhaps some training and likely some imagination beyond what you might actually see.

Building a model of your proposed boat building project will this early already require an increasingly in depth understanding of the plans and the building key which many, but not all, of our designs tend to have. Then you can proceed to assemble her in model scale for a reasonably serious early low budget dive into the satisfactions and headaches of eventually doing her in 1/1 scale, i.e., for real.

You might go so far as to find or do scale crew to realistically understand her as a platform outside and inside, particularly relevant for boats with cabin, whether for overnighting or fulltime living aboard. 3D printing folks might make short work of doing a scale edition of yourself to match that model boat scale. Ultimately a tangible 3D model of the proposed project should offer the realism not even computer renditions can quite produce.

The most obvious way to do a model is to use the plans as they are and build her to plans scale, meaning in the scale the design is modeled on paper to fit on the given paper size. In the case of Design #679, measuring 30'8" in length in 1/1 scale, the plans are drawn in the scale of 3/4" to 1' which would result in a model measuring just a tad over 23". And that is actually quite useful to follow the proposed construction sequence, then checking clearances inside her cabin via your scale correct crew and, of course, her looks, including holding her in your hands and doing the motions of her at sea, nothing wrong with that and certainly not childish.

The broom broom noise, however, may be a different story.

So you'd pull a copy of the plans you bought and use that copy to build the model with. Such in house use of plans duplicates off legitimate plans bought from the designer would be ethically acceptable since you'd not be cranking these out for sale on eBay but rather first for model building and then for rough daily use on the shop floor building her. To emphasize the perhaps not so obvious, just about all of our designs drawn in collaboration with clients never saw them pay the full actual man hours and expertise it took to produce plans and building keys. And that typically means that the only way we break even and then make a living beyond that is to sell copies, with nobody getting rich.

Using this set of model plan copies you'd cautiously practice how to effectively use sharpest hobby knives to precisely cut out respective bulkheads, keel profiles, hull panel expansions, decks, wheelhouse panels, etc. And since water based glues would wet and thus distort these small and larger pieces of paper, a real no no, we'd use spray on contact cement to attach these precise scale correct cutouts to either cardboard or model plywood.

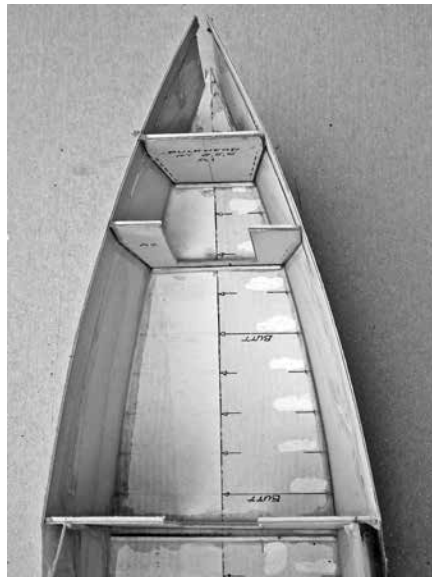
We went reasonably far down this path in this plans scale model of Design #679 Monitor by contact cementing blueline cut-outs onto such plywood, then carefully cut to the precise shape we'd just glued on to it, all a good test of concentration and patience of which any boat builder will need much more of during the 1/1 scale project. The pictures tell that story, obviously also documenting the fact, for instance, that the stem-piece was never shaped in balsa wood and then inserted or had the waterways installed, or the vee nose ribs arranged. However, our 80% approach reflected our interest to do this exercise in scale, but rather crude fashion, without too much time invested in nice details except to indeed get a sound confirmation that that critically important but rather odd shaped vee nose expansion did indeed work in 3D.

Years later, in the context of #681 SACPAS-3, I did just a scale correct vee nose model, not even a simple hull model of her, to affirm the expansion of what would be those six pieces in 1/4" Douglas fir plywood, Payson jointed to measure over 21' in length, to not have a major schedule busting failure on my hands in full public view. Once the first such 1/1 scale full length panel assumed that seemingly implausible radius of the curvature over the vee nose backbone and ribs

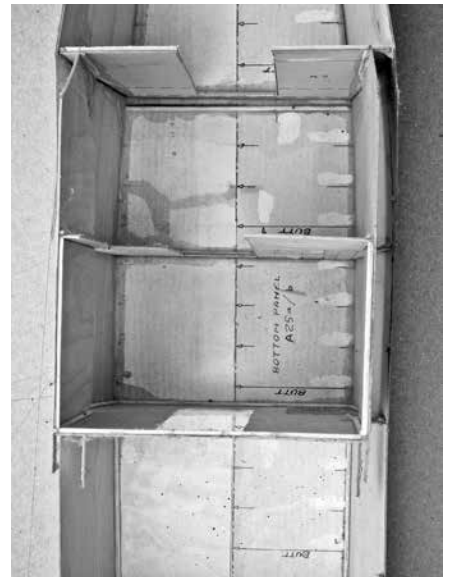
without protest, as in ugly warning noises or outright cracking, one major milestone in her assembly had been successfully passed.

Adding the other side, and then two more layers on each side, resulted in one of the sharpest and more sturdy bow shapes doable in plain plywood without kerfing the inside, slicing sections of that expansion, some wild attempts at torturing or whatever form of makeshift fix one might have had to resort to. Good to know what the geometry will allow and what the material will agree with. Another good reason why modelling the whole boat or just sections of the project in plans scale is a sound early step.

While on that landing craft the 1/1 scale bow was reinforced with three layers of 10oz glass cloth plus that 3"x3" rubber face of the bow's leading edge, this model version of this bow geometry offered all that was important to know using just one layer of that thinnest three ply model aircraft plywood, pricey stuff that, but worth it.

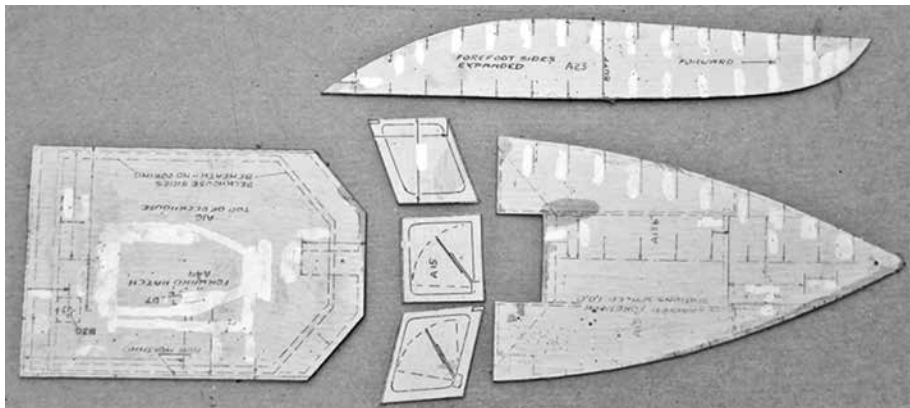


#4. The same section top down, with the bulkheads located according to plan and even the 4" wide transverse plywood sheet butt joints showing.

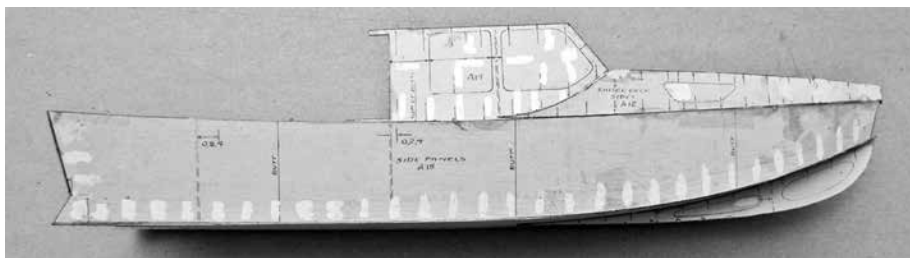


#5. Amidships top down, with tiny balsa-wood corner cleats to widen the bulkhead to bottom and topsides joints. On #681 in 1/1 scale each such joint between 1/2" bulkheads and the hull skins was reinforced with 1" cleats on either side of the joint to result in 2 1/2" joints, plus minor corner filleting. That 1"x1" fastening cleat was ripped out of 1" plywood with the inside corner facing the cabin rounded over with the router.

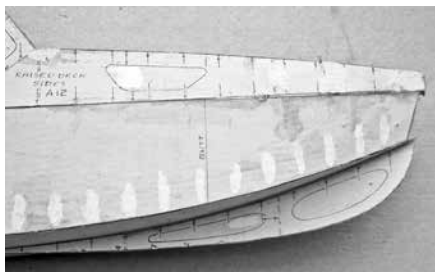
## Photo Commentary



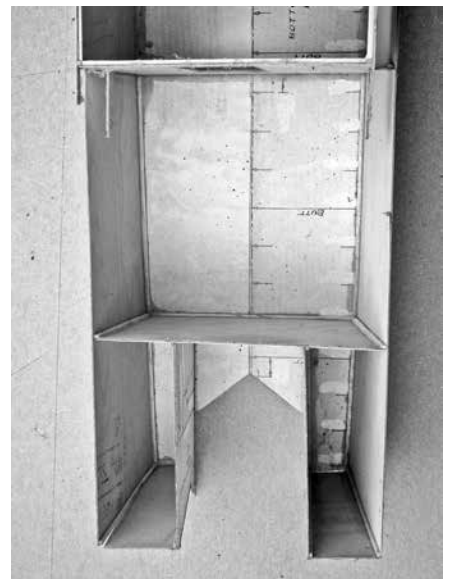
#1. Here the plans scale pieces for the foredeck, house top, three piece windshield and the vee nose expansion of the Monitor version Design



#2. The 23' long plans scale hull of #679, without the vee nose panel installed.

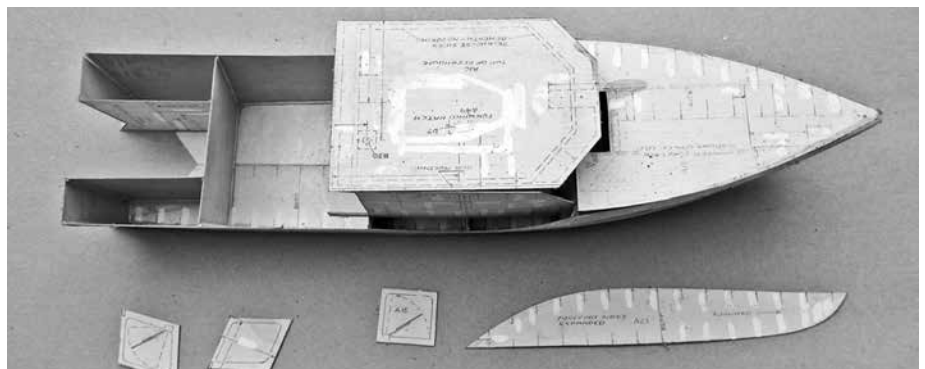


#3. The bow section with the plans offsets whited out for less clutter.

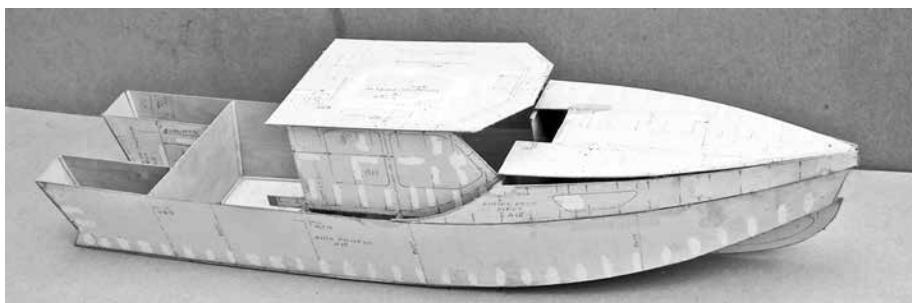


#6. Here an early rendering of her outboard well and cockpit. By now, in 2020, some of the joints are failing.

#7. That hull with housetop and foredeck laid on, beginning to look like a cabin cruiser.







#8. With greater care and precision, the roof and foredeck could be made to fit well and tight and yet still removable to put more interior into her along with a scale correct crew for further realism.

David C. in Chile had explored a range of Phil's designs in model scale but then also a number in 1/1 projects finished for a lot of use in the water by family and friends were #449 Oldshoe, #425 Nymph, #316 Zephyr and #417 Skimmer.

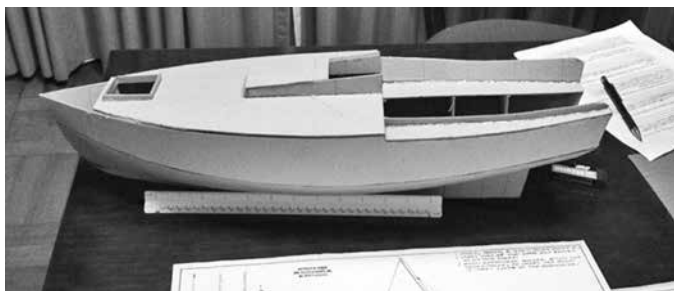
Here from his commentary on models he has built out of cardboard and plywood:



#9. This photo includes Seabird '86, my 3' stretch of Seabird (to explore more interior room) and the hull of #486 Long Micro.



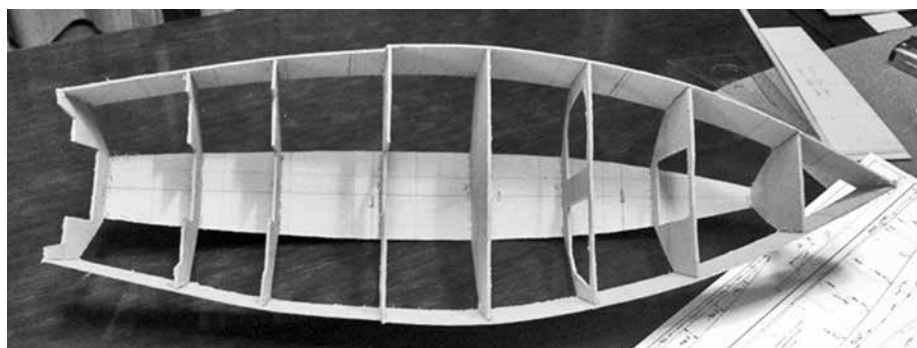
#10. Here is Ruben's Nymph, Long Micro and Seabird-86.



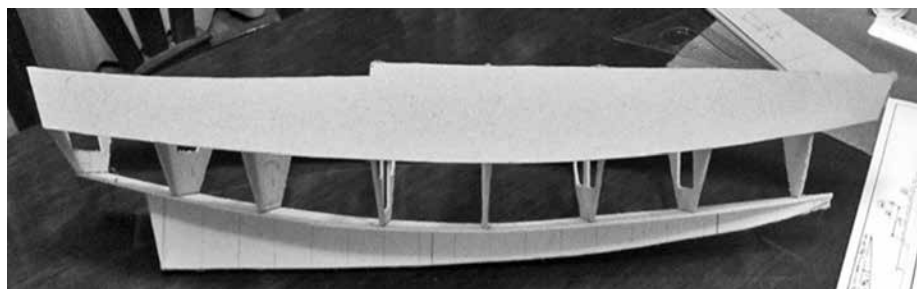
#15. Bilge panels installed and deck and cockpit benches in place.



11. Here my wooden #395 Light Schooner model. This was my first go at modelling and very enjoyable but much slower than building "quick and dirty" in cardboard.



#12. SEABIRD'86 hull incomplete but getting there.



#13. Her long keel bottom silhouette and that raised deck emerging.



#14. Every frame and bulkhead according to plans, just in plans scale, with the actual plans showing in the lower right hand corner, a realistic study of how the 1/1 scale effort will go together. And a reasonable early test of the accuracy of the plans.

Clearly, David C. has found a good amount of value in doing plans scale models before making decisions to go from plans to building the actual boat in 1/1 scale. Yes, some will argue that 3D computer renderings are at least as good, except that doing the physical work of cutting out these pieces and panels and then fitting everything is a tactile experience not really on offer in a PC flat panel view. And you get to touch and follow her lines and “play boat.” Then proud display of her on her on a shelf, the mantlepiece.

After this model, and based on his past experience building these 1/1 scale actual boats, plus a sober assessment of the likely budget required and the building space necessary, David did decide to build Sea-bird '86. And that discussion in the next issue.

(Plans for Design #525 plywood Sea-bird '86 consisting of nine sheets featuring all versions are available for \$300 from us, Phil Bolger & Friends, 66 Atlantic St, Gloucester, MA 01930-1627)



#16. And here the optional doghouse in place protecting the two forward cockpit seats and the companionway.



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A VHF radio's range over which it transmits and receives signals is dependent upon the height of the radio's antenna. The higher the antenna, the better coverage for the radio's signals and reception. The VHF radio's range is limited by the line of sight restriction inherent in VHF operation. One of my handheld radios had an attachment to connect the device to the boat's longer/higher VHF antenna. If your handheld does not have such an attachment, you can probably purchase a universal attachment that will work. If your boat's radio goes out, it might be nice to be able to use the handheld radio attached to the boat's antenna to communicate.

My first radio was a CB that was purchased after spending a night on the water about two miles from the marina with no way to communicate when the engine would not start (setting off an aerial flare in a wild-life refuge did not seem like a good idea). I had considered a CB an added expense until that night. After that experience I had a CB on board all my boats until the VHF radio came along. Then I purchased a VHF radio for the boat.

Along the way I also acquired a handheld VHF. When we were doing race committee work, the boat's VHF was set to Channel 16 while the handheld was on 68 to talk to the race participants. At that point I still



had my CB (with license) and with addition of the LORAN-C receiver, the three antennas on the hardtop made the boat look somewhat like a military command vessel. By the way, you do not want two VHF radios on the same channel on the same boat. The results are interesting and not nice, especially when you transmit on one of the radios.

People forget that their GPS notes where the antenna is located, not where they (the person and GPS reporting device) actually are located. Due to a number of factors, the GPS reading may be in error and checking the reading with a known location marker (fixed piling?) may be a good idea. While most of you will not have this concern, when I was working with GPS data in the GIS Unit there were two questions about any data supplied. The first was the projection the unit was set to use and the second was the North American Datum (NAD) being used to report the latitude/longitude of the place being identified.

At that time most GPS units used NAD 27 as their default, but the newer units were using NAD 83. Then there was the joy of converting the military grid coordinates to the civilian grid we used. Just because the GPS has given you a location, a little verifying from time to time is a good idea.

In my case, after the engine had started and it was warming up, on my checklist before leaving the float was the GPS reading. I compared it with the one noted on the boat's device for any major difference. If the reading on the GPS display matched the noted lat/long readings on the checklist, then all was well with the GPS at that time.

I also had a hardcopy list of the lat/long readings of every mark, buoy, etc. that I had recorded in the GPS unit's memory. If the memory failed for some reason and the unit was still receiving, I could load in the lat/long needed to get to the mark desired. Yes, after years on the water I am a belt and suspenders person when it comes to selected redundancy in information and equipment available.

The wire that held one of our bird feeders failed and I needed to devise another way to hang the feeder from the tree limb. Among

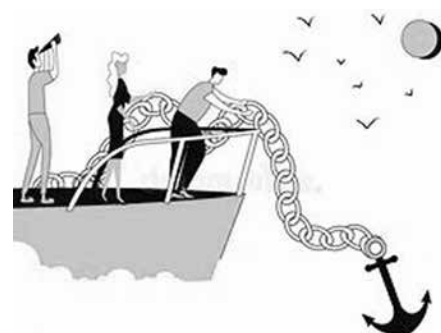
my collection of "stuff" were two 3' long rubber coated wires with loops at each end. The loops were secured by clamps with stainless steel screws. The clamps were some type of alloyed lead designed to hold the wire. I have no idea what the setup was designed for or why I had them among the other odds and ends being stored. The screws unfastened quite nicely and I was able to thread the wire through the holes in the wood feeder where the previous wire had been attached. I measured and found the right length for the wire and reattached the wire to create a new loop. All worked out very well and the non rusted clamp and screws made the job a lot easier.

I saw a small car with a rowing shell on top. The shell stuck out at least 4' in front and in back of the car. The car was rather low and the bow of the shell could easily be smashed into the back of a bigger vehicle. I know about this possible problem as I used to carry our Tornado's 30' mast on top of the hearse and almost put the front end of the mast through the back window of the van in front of me at a traffic light.

At that point, I put a flag on the front end of the mast to match the one at the other end. The front flag was to remind me about the distance in front of the hood while the aft flag was to warn others behind me. Once I built a tilt trailer for the Tornado the mast was no longer a concern as it rode in brackets on the trailer and with its aft flag was high enough that only a semi driver coming up behind me would have any concerns. Later, a tilt trailer that I purchased had the mast secured at an angle so that the front end was over the hearse and the aft end was set in a pocket, which was definitely a better arrangement than what I had put together with my home built rig.

How long would it take you to get your boat's anchor deployed? Is it tied down securely forward, rode attached and the rest? Unfastening the anchor can take some time that you may not have. While an unsecured anchor is a menace in a seaway, there should be a way to release it quickly. The anchor for the Sisu 26 was in the cockpit ready to go. The chain was attached as was the rode. While I usually moved the anchor forward when it was time to anchor, I could also just put it over the side and play out the line (while going forward) and tie it off on the forward bit. If necessary, I could secure the rode to the aft towing bits located on both sides of the cockpit. The 150' of 1/2" rode was in a bucket and played out freely (old whaler trick).

The marina owner where we kept our converted whaleboat came by when we were working on some cosmetic stuff one morning and commented, "There are those who work on their boats and those who sail their boats. You need to decide which." It was a beautiful day and that afternoon we went sailing.



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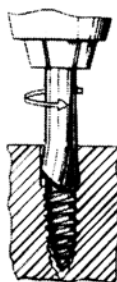
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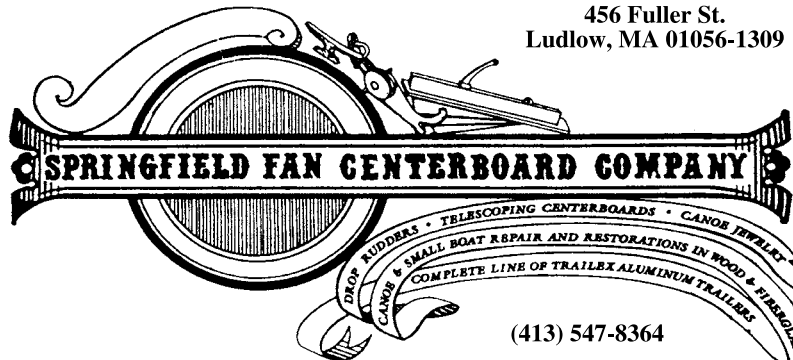
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GREG GRUNDTISCH, Lancaster, NY, grundys-woodworks@roadrunner.com (10)

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EDWARD STEWART, Kingsport, TN, mobil/text 828 342-9201. (10)

**17' Swampscott Sailing Dory**, built at The Land- ing School '89, pine on oak, copper riveted. Vy gd cond, on registered road-ready trlr. Fred Dion design featured in *The Dory Book*, stored inside, ready to sail, Shaw and Tenney oars, decent cover. \$3,500, offers considered.  
JOHN SANDUSKY, Rocky Point (LI) NY, [johnsandusky@hotmail.com](mailto:johnsandusky@hotmail.com) (10)



**Old Town Vintage '50s Rowing Canoe**, barn find stored since '70s, in family since new. Double row- ing stations. Glassed by me. 1' of bow rails need replacing, otherwise good bones, no broken ribs, sheathing good. This canoe makes an excellent rough water rowboat, very fast. No oars, lost in the move. \$600.  
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NED HARDING, Sandwich, NH (9)



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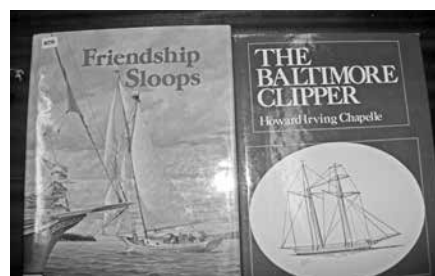


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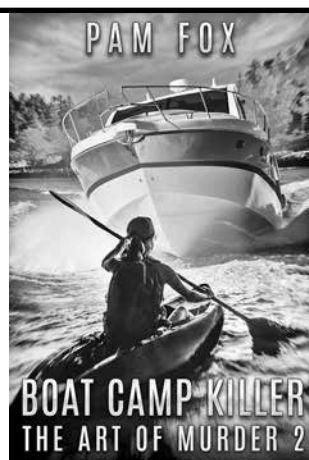
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